

Oxfordshire Guardian

Didcot, Wallingford & Thame

Thursday, March 22 - Wednesday, March 28, 2018

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Free

Weekly
leisure
guide for
in and
around
Oxford



Fight for drug
gets support
from MPs

Page 3



Today's the day!
Orchard Centre
phase 2 opens

Page 5



New campaign
highlights
online risks

Pages 6&7

Looking for Didcot? Turn right at Narnia, left at Emerald City...

By Owen Hughes

MOTORISTS could have been forgiven for thinking they were driving into fantasy lands rather than a garden town as road signs took an unusual direction.

Taking a right turn towards the A4130 could land you in Middle Earth sooner than Wallingford, or making a left towards Sutton Courtenay could put you face to face with the wicked witch of the west in Emerald City.

Quick trips to Neverland to hang out with Peter Pan, or a snowy jaunt through Narnia with Aslan, are only just around the corner.

Councillor Tony Harbour, cabinet member for Didcot Garden Town at South Oxfordshire District Council, quipped: "I was following the yellow brick road for 15 minutes before I realised I wasn't in Oz."

The anonymous culprit might want to avoid following their own directions to Gotham City as Batman and Robin might bring them to justice for defacing the street signs.

Didcot Mayor, Cllr Jackie Billington, said: "It would be lovely if the fantasy names could remain, however, a road sign has been vandalised and as such the person concerned may be fined, so perhaps they best remain anonymous."

The perpetrator's actions on Friday

have certainly put Didcot on the map as the stunt has attracted national attention.

But the anonymous man has since said he wanted to change people's perceptions about the south Oxfordshire town which last March was named the 'most normal town in England'.

He said there is no such thing as normal, describing it as a "fun, funky place".

Photos posted on Facebook by Karl Harris on Sunday morning went viral, with the pictures shared more than 2,000 times on social media.

Cllr Billington added: "I, for one, am intrigued to find Narnia or Neverland."

"However, a tourist visiting for the first time, potentially may take several hours driving round in circles trying to find Gotham City."

"Whoever did this must be delighted by all the interest caused by their actions."

"The fantasy names do not look out of place on any of the road signs, hence maybe why they were put up last Friday."

"It has certainly caused a lot of talk around the town and many people are driving to the signs just to be able to see them first hand."

She added: "We are not just a 'normal' town, but quite unique."

Charlotte Westgate wrote: "I saw



someone doing this Friday afternoon... hadn't realised they had got to so many signs."

Fellow Facebook user Karl Gibbons wrote that he saw someone "in a high

vis putting these up on Friday".

Oxfordshire County Council said that while the signs were amusing, they could prove to be distracting to motorists.

The authority added the rogue names will not be removed until after potholes on the area's roads have been filled in with the signs not being the 'most pressing concern'.

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Read this paper online at
www.oxfordshireguardian.co.uk

The Oxfordshire
Guardian Group is
published by Taylor
Newspapers Ltd.

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Printed by Iliffe Print -
'PrintWeek Newspaper
Printer of the Year 2016'



Delivering infrastructure to make county prosper

By George Welch

MILLIONS of pounds dedicated to major infrastructure improvements across Oxfordshire have been approved.

The Oxfordshire Growth Board published details on Tuesday of the first round of key projects to receive funding in the first year of the five-year Oxfordshire Housing & Growth Deal.

The biggest winner was the Botley Road corridor project, which will receive £3.2million towards improvements.

Elsewhere, the Access to Headington scheme will get £3m, there is a cash boost of £1.4m for cycle and pedestrian routes across Oxford and £500,000 will be spent on looking at widening Botley Road rail bridge.

Making the announcement, Councillor Bob Price, pictured, chair of Oxfordshire Growth Board, described the funding allocation as "a significant moment for Oxfordshire".

He added: "Just last month all the districts, the city council and the county council united to seal a deal with government, and now we are delighted to announce this first year of funding to start delivering the infrastructure residents have been calling for as we continue to prosper and grow as a county."

The Deal will deliver £215million over a five year-period to pay for infrastructure and affordable housing. Around £30m will be provided for

Botley Road Corridor	£3.2m
Access to Headington	£3m
North of Oxford Corridor Routes Improvements	£1.5m
Oxford-wide cycle and pedestrian routes	£1.4m
A40 Western Strategic Corridor Improvements	£1m
Tramway Road Banbury	£657,000
Access to Carterton	£575,000
Botley Road Rail Bridge	£500,000
South East Oxford Corridor Improvements	£300,000
Featherbed Lane capacity improvements, South Oxfordshire	£200,000

infrastructure each year, taking the total level of investment to £150m, while £60m will be for housing and £5m for capacity funding.

Ten schemes from across the county will share around £12m worth of funding over the next year. They include:

- A feasibility study to provide a westbound bus lane linking Wolvercote to the proposed Eynsham Park and Ride site
- Improvements to key link roads in Carterton and Banbury
- Widening of the Botley Road rail bridge in Oxford and improvements to the Botley Road corridor
- Upgrading Featherbed Lane, near Milton Hill to provide improved and safer access between the Didcot and Wantage areas.

A further £20m will go

towards other projects that are still being finalised.

Cllr Price added: "We hope the project funding is the start of further investment to follow in the coming months, as we await news of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) bids submitted last September for Didcot Garden Town, West Oxfordshire and north of Oxford."



InBrief

£200k from Radiothon

OUR charity of the year Helen & Douglas House has revealed its annual three-day broadcasting event raised more than £200,000.

The Radiothon held earlier this month received an impressive £200,908 in donations from members of the public, making it the most raised yet in the three years the hospice has been running the event.

Parents shared their heart-breaking stories of their children's illnesses to help raise the cash which smashed last year's total of £65,000.

Welsh actor and comedian Rob Brydon, who has supported Helen & Douglas House for many years and recently visited the hospice and gave his backing to the Radiothon.

Rob said: "They provide vital care to local terminally ill children and their families, helping them deal with the implications of living with a child who will die prematurely, so they can make the most of their time together."

See page 16 for more on Helen & Douglas House

Health meeting

RESIDENTS are invited to attend Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group's board meeting at Banbury town hall next Thursday at 9am.

The meeting will provide an update on current issues and progress being made to improve patient care.

The full agenda will be available at tinyurl.com/y8f7x4lw from today.

Don't forget
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forward an hour
at 2am on Sunday



Return of winter leads to accidents

SNOWY and icy conditions caused chaos on Oxfordshire's roads, days after the recent cold snap finally drew to a close.

The return of the white stuff caused treacherous driving conditions for motorists on Sunday and Monday morning.

Schools opened late and bin collections were delayed across the county while emergency shelter was provided to rough sleepers in Oxford.

On the roads, emergency services were scrambled to two major incidents when a car slipped off the M40 and caught fire before a lorry crashed through the barriers on the Oxford Eastern Bypass.

A raging fire wrecked the car that skidded off the M40 near Bicester after crashing down the verge of an icy slip road.

Firefighters were called out just after 4.30am on Sunday to the southbound entry slip road onto the M40, at junction 9 (Wendlebury).

The driver veered off the slippery road and rolled down a steep embankment, managing to escape before the car burst into flames.

Police closed the road so firefighters could make the scene safe, but Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service did not specify whether the person was injured. A statement issued by the



The lorry on the Oxford Eastern Bypass and below, the car on fire on the M40



fire service said the driver was 'fortunate' to escape from the car before it caught fire.

The same day, a lorry fell off the bridge section of the Oxford Eastern Bypass.

The KBC Logistics lorry crashed through the central reservation at around 11pm, ploughing through the nearside barrier and falling off the bridge

before landing on the roundabout of the B480 below.

A pothole combined with icy conditions have been blamed for the incident.

One lane of the bypass was still closed at Cowley as we went to press on Wednesday.

Go to tinyurl.com/y9eto7dn for advice on safe driving in icy conditions.

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Tributes paid to man hit by cars

A MAN has died after being hit by a 'number of vehicles' on a country road near Henley.

Daniel James, 30, from Bracknell, died at the scene of the incident at around 5.30am on Saturday.

A section of the A4155 between the south Oxfordshire town and Marlow, in south Buckinghamshire, was closed for several hours after 'a number of vehicles collided with a pedestrian', police said.

Mr James' family paid tribute to the 'much-loved' son and brother.

A family statement read: "It is with deep sadness that a much-loved son and brother has passed away.

"Born and raised in Bracknell, he had many friends and touched the hearts of many more.

"Although Daniel faced many challenges due to his ASD (autism spectrum disorder) he led a full and colourful life, possessed many special qualities that made him unique, as well as having a loving family that supported him in everything he did."

The Force is now appealing to any motorists who travelled on the A4155 around the time of the incident for information.

Investigating officer, Insp Steve Wakeford of the Joint Roads Policing Unit, said: "I am particularly interested to hear from any motorists who witnessed a collision on the road, saw anything in the road or had to swerve to avoid anything in the road."

Contact police on 101 quoting reference number 269 (17/3) if you have information.



Campaigners buoyed by MPs' support of CF drug

By Owen Hughes

PARENTS held a candlelit vigil outside parliament on Monday after MPs debated a petition to make life changing drugs available on the NHS.

Wallingford couple Zoe and Graham Bagley's three-year-old daughter, Grace, takes a cocktail of medication and uses physiotherapy to treat her incurable cystic fibrosis.

A drug called Orkambi could slow the decline in her lung function by almost half, but was not recommended to the NHS by government health watchdog the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) in July 2016 due to its cost.

After an online petition reached more than 113,000 signatures, the issue was raised in parliament as nearly 100 protestors gathered outside in the wintry conditions to lend their voice to the debate.

Zoe, who also met Henley MP John Howell on Friday, said: "It seems like it was a hugely positive debate, 60 MPs attended and lots of them used personal stories from their constituencies.

"There's still a way to go because there's probably a lot of wrangling to be done over the price, but it feels like we have got the support now and the momentum is behind us."

David Ramsden, chief executive of the Cystic Fibrosis Trust, said the debate is a "major milestone" for bringing about access to precision medicines.



Grace Bagley's parents are fighting for her and fellow CF sufferers to be given the drug Orkambi which could significantly improve the condition

On Friday, NHS England put forward a new proposal to Vertex, manufacturers of Orkambi, which was dismissed by the pharmaceutical company.

A Vertex spokesperson said: "We are astonished and dismayed by NHS England's initial response to our portfolio approach.

"It amounts to a refusal to make any additional funding available for Orkambi or future medicines.

"The scale of parliamentary engagement in this debate echoes and amplifies the CF community's

sense of urgency.

"Every day matters for CF patients and we stand ready and willing to engage in meaningful dialogue about a way forward."

An NHS England spokesperson said the NHS can only offer treatments which are "both effective for patients and offer good value for taxpayers" and said further progress is "frankly unlikely" unless Vertex reviews its proposed pricing.

A NICE spokesperson said it remains open to a further approach with "new data or a revised price".

InBrief

Nearing completion

CONSTRUCTION of a high-tech/R&D project at Abingdon Business Park is nearing completion.

The framework and cladding on four units covering nearly 50,000 sq ft is in place at the Foxcombe scheme and contractors are on target to be finished by May.

Developers said the scheme is generating 'considerable' interest from technology companies looking to cement a place in Oxfordshire's knowledge economy.

The units, of 10,000 sq ft upwards, will be available on a full repairing and insuring basis.

Folly to open

FARINGDON'S famous folly tower has announced its opening dates for 2018 after a 'very successful 2017'.

The first open day of this year will be on April 1, which this year doubles up as April Fools' Day and Easter Sunday, from 11am to 5pm.

The tower will then be open on the first and third Sundays of the month until October 21, at the same times.

Entry to the 100ft tall tower costs £3 for adults or £1 for under-16s.

Lottery tickets

TICKETS for South Oxfordshire District Council's new community lottery will go on sale on Tuesday.

The online SO Charitable Lottery will raise funds for voluntary and charitable groups and a new website www.socharitable.co.uk is now live.

Tickets cost £1 to buy via the website with 60p from each going towards good causes and the community. The first weekly draw will take place on April 28.

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Pick from new crop of stores at expanded Orchard Centre

By Owen Hughes

SHOPPERS in Didcot finally get their first glimpse of the expanded Orchard Centre today as six retailers unveil their new shop fronts.

The £50million expansion opened in the heart of Didcot's shopping district less than 12 months after construction work began.

Starbucks is first to open at 7am, followed by discount retail chain TK Maxx at 9am with rickshaw-style 'pedicabs' available to ferry customers.

At 10am, the flagship M&S Foodhall will swing open its doors, offering a 48-seat M&S Café.

An in-store DJ will greet customers at the H&M store opening from 11am, with the first 200 customers in the queue on launch day receiving a goodie-bag. All customers in the queue at H&M before 11am will get a 25 per cent discount wristband valid for the entire day.

Boots and River Island also cut the ribbons on new stores this morning.

Free yoga classes will be available twice a day at the Orchard Centre at 11.30am and 1pm until April 7 at Pop-Up Didcot, opposite the new TK Maxx and River Island stores.

Yoga instructors will run the



Finishing touches are put to the new stores earlier this week

exercise classes with a special mother and baby session at 11.30am on March 31, suitable for new mums between eight and 10 weeks after birth.

Thomas Cochrane, development manager at Hammerson, said: "We are excited to be able to offer free yoga as part of our programme of events."

Didcot residents are also being encouraged to suggest names for the new public square in the extension.

Suggestions could have a historical connection to Didcot, relate to notable people and buildings, or be a futuristic name linking to the Science Vale.

Councillor Tony Harbour, cabinet

member for Didcot Garden Town at South Oxfordshire District Council, said: "This is an excellent opportunity for residents to get involved and name an important part of the expansion for future generations."

Suggestions can be made online at <http://bit.ly/2DFiQ7f>

InBrief

Calling all artists

ARTISTS inspired by the historic Ridgeway and its ancient road are being invited to submit an entry for a new exhibition in Faringdon next month.

The Swire Ridgeway Arts Prize offers prizes for works of painting, sculpture, photography and writing (poetry or prose) ahead of its public opening on April 21.

For more information visit: <http://bit.ly/2tRibAi>

Best kebab van

THERE'S no place better for a kebab than Thame, after family business Atalay's Kebab Van retained its title at the 2018 British Kebab Awards on Monday.

Resul Atalay and his twin sons, Jason and Josh, were again crowned Best Kebab Van after last year's success.

New boss for Soha

A FORMER Oxfam director has been appointed the new chief executive of a Didcot-based housing association.

Kate Wareing will take up the position at Soha Housing in July after working in the sector for more than 20 years.

Kate runs her own business Butterfly UK and Global Consultancy, and has previously worked for Cherwell Housing Trust and Oxfordshire County Council.

Young entrepreneur in top 30 list

A Wallingford-based entrepreneur has been included in the Forbes Europe '30 Under 30' list recognising 'youthful visionaries'.

Marcus Taylor, 26, made the cut in the 2018 edition in the media and marketing sector having grown his digital services company into a global team of more than 20 marketers, product designers and developers.

Marcus started building websites at age 10 before co-founding Venture Harbour, based at Howbury Business Park, in 2012.

Marcus said: "It's fantastic to be recognised by Forbes."

"Venture Harbour continues to expand with each of the new ventures we build, and I'm really proud that we are now one of the 50 fastest growing tech companies in the UK."

Venture Harbour has built nine

Marcus Taylor, CEO and co-founder of Venture Harbour, has been included in the Media and Marketing sector of the Forbes list



ventures so far, including lead generation software and artificial intelligence chatbots.

Donna Bowles, Estates Manager at Howbury Business Park, said: "We're very proud of Marcus's success, and also of his aim to make Venture Harbour one of the best places to work."

"They have made themselves a unique creative space, with standing desks and a non-corporate feel."

"We often see Marcus and the team playing outdoor sports on the park lawn, and it's good to see they take time out to play as well as work hard."

More safer places for vulnerable to go

A SCHEME providing safe spaces for vulnerable people in south Oxfordshire is being expanded following its success in other areas of the district.

Nine businesses and community centres in Henley have already signed up to provide sanctuary for people feeling lost, worried or threatened as part of the Safe Places project.

This follows the success of the scheme in Wallingford and Didcot where 27 premises have signed up.

Jan Sunman, a volunteer from

Oxfordshire Family Support Network, one of the partners behind the scheme, said Safe Places gives vulnerable people greater confidence in engaging in the community.

Under the scheme people can request a special card to carry when they are out and about. This provides details of someone to contact if they need help.

However, a Safe Places card is not needed to enter a participating location and ask for assistance. Staff have been trained

by the county's fire service.

Premises taking part in the scheme will display a distinctive Safe Places logo in the window.

Visit safeplaces.org.uk for locations and more information.

If you or someone you know wishes to request a Safe Places contact card, or you are a business interested in becoming a Safe Place, contact South Oxfordshire District Council's Community Safety Team by emailing communitysafety@southoxfordshire.gov.uk or calling 01235 422593.

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News

You can't hide from internet, you just need to be educated about the risk

The dangers of making 'friends' online have been highlighted in a new campaign – Hidden Harm – launched by Thames Valley Police to raise awareness of the issue, using Ellie's story the force wants to make people aware of the potential risks

A TEENAGER left 'vulnerable' and 'anxious' after being sexually abused by a 40-year-old man she met online has urged other youngsters not to fall prey to similar abusers.

The girl, using the pseudonym Ellie, told her story to raise awareness of online grooming. She was 12 when the grooming began.

In the video, Ellie, who took to the web as she struggled to make friends at school, describes how she started talking to the man when he convincingly posed as a 15-year-old boy online.

After talking online for a few months, the pair formed a close relationship and agreed to meet up.

The person who actually met

Ellie was a man in his forties, saying his son was ill and he did not want to disappoint her by not showing up.

They continued to see each other over the course of a year, meeting up more than 50 times.

The man bought Ellie, who was sexually abused 'on a number of occasions', a phone and a laptop to talk to him, and started warning her not to tell anyone about their relationship.

One day the contact stopped. The man was jailed for an unrelated crime.

It wasn't until the police found a photo of Ellie three years later in someone else's possession they got in touch with her and persuaded her to tell her story.

She said: "I wanted to stop it



Picture posed by model

from the moment it started but I had this feeling I couldn't do it because no one was going to believe me.

"Not only had something stopped three years prior come back to me, I also didn't know there were explicit images of me."

Years on, Ellie and her family are still affected by the abuse.

"I have a lot of social anxiety now. I find it difficult to integrate into big crowds.

"My step-dad really blamed himself and my mum thinks she could've asked more questions.

"But you can't blame the parents for letting the child on



Some of the knives handed in during the amnesty last month



Amnesty reinforces danger message

SCARY looking Zombie knives, bayonets and an axe were among the 172 blades handed in to police during a week-long amnesty last month.

Special bins were placed at 16 police stations across the Thames Valley, including in Abingdon, Banbury, Bicester, HQ Kidlington, Oxford and Witney.

Items handed in ranged from bread and Stanley knives through to a bayonet with scabbards, an axe and Zombie knives.

The latter, inspired by horror

films, has curved blades with serrated edges.

They were often sold as collectors' items, but were increasingly used by criminals and the government banned them in 2016.

The amnesty was part of Operation Sceptre.

According to TVP figures, knife crime across the Thames Valley increased by 28 per cent in the past year.

Chief Inspector Helen Roberts, the officer responsible for

coordinating Operation Sceptre at TVP, said: "Knife crime ruins lives.

"Carrying a knife can result in you committing a serious crime and having to live with the consequences – also you are four times more likely to be a victim of knife crime if you carry a knife.

"You might feel a sense of being invincible when you carry a knife, but that isn't the case, you are likely to make risky decisions and as a result put yourself in dangerous situations."

Parents must talk to their children about online life

ELLIE'S story was released last week by Thames Valley Police as part of its Hidden Harm campaign with the NSPCC.

Detective Superintendent Nick John, head of Thames Valley Police's Protecting Vulnerable People Unit, said: "Ellie's story is a powerful example of how something as simple as accepting a friend request from a person you don't know online can escalate into something with

serious consequences.

"The internet is a huge part of most of our lives, especially for the younger generation and, while it brings a great deal of positive opportunities, unfortunately it can be misused by some people.

"This campaign isn't about scaring people or telling them not to let their children use the internet.

"It's about making everyone aware of the potential risks associated with children being online, ensuring they can spot the signs that may indicate a child is being abused and educating everyone on ways we can all help to keep them safe."

NSPCC campaigns manager Emma Motherwell said: "The internet offers so many great platforms for children to communicate and learn but as Ellie has highlighted, by bravely sharing her story, it does have its dangers.

"That's why it's so important that parents talk to their children about their online world just as they do about their everyday lives, ensuring they are ready to listen and support them if something does go wrong."

For more information on the campaign, visit thamesvalley.police.uk/hiddenharm or contact parentworkshops@nspcc.org.uk

Thames Valley Police's poster highlighting the Hidden Harm campaign

HIDDEN HARM

Do you really know who you're talking to online?

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childline

0800 1111



the internet. In this day and age they will get on the internet. It's not something you can hide from anymore, it's just something you need to be educated on."

She added: "You don't have to do anything anyone online tells you - whether you know them or not."

Pair caught using fake Scottish £20 to buy a pregnancy test kit

TWO scammers caught with hundreds of pounds worth of fake bank notes were found guilty of using counterfeit money as genuine currency.

Ricky Burton, 30, and Scott Reed, 28, both from Portsmouth, were jailed for 15 months and 12 months respectively, at Oxford Crown Court on Thursday last week.

The pair were found with around £480 worth of counterfeit Scottish bank notes in Abingdon on March 29 last year.

The alarm was raised when Reed tried to use a £20 note to buy a pregnancy kit at Savers in High Street.

The forged notes failed rip and ultraviolet tests and the manager refused to hand the note back.

Reed left but he and his partner-in-crime Burton were later cornered by police.



Officers searched the car they had been travelling in and discovered a 'bulk' of the counterfeit notes.

The men were arrested and later charged with the offences.

During the trial, both of the men denied the charges, claiming they had stumbled upon the stash by chance.

But they were found guilty of possessing counterfeit currency and tendering a counterfeit note as genuine currency.

Men flee attempted ram raid

FOUR men used a stolen Land Rover Discovery in an attempt to remove the cashpoint from a Spar in Bodicote, near Banbury.

The thieves left the scene in Molyneux Drive empty handed, abandoning the stolen vehicle in the process after the incident at around 4.30am on Wednesday last week.

Police, who said the thieves fled in a grey coloured Audi, are appealing

for information.

The attempted burglary in north Oxfordshire is the seventh ram raid to take place in the county in recent months.

The force said it is unable to confirm whether the incidents are connected.

Contact police on 101 quoting reference number 43180077683 if you have any information on the Bodicote incident.

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'Tireless champion' dies

RODNEY Rose, the former deputy leader of Oxfordshire County Council, has died.

Mr Rose had served as the chairman of the joint delivery board for the western section of the East West rail project in addition to his work on the council.

Paying tribute, Ian Hudspeth, the leader of the council, said his friend was a 'tireless champion' for public services in Oxfordshire.

Mr Hudspeth said: "It was with great sadness that we learned that Rodney Rose, the deputy leader of Oxfordshire County Council until last year, died at the weekend.

"I will miss him greatly as a friend and colleague. On behalf of everyone



at Oxfordshire County Council who knew and worked with him, I send his family our deepest condolences.

"I worked closely with Rodney for many years. He was a tireless and dedicated local councillor for Charlbury and Wychwood.

"As a long-serving member of the cabinet, he had ranging

responsibilities for council services." He added: "He was a tireless champion of Oxfordshire's fire and rescue service.

"He represented the county council on several major projects that will benefit Oxfordshire, including the east-west rail scheme and the planned flood alleviation scheme around west Oxford. These will be his legacy as a public servant."

Liam Walker, county councillor for the Hanborough and Minster Lovell ward, described Mr Rose as "a true gent dedicated to his community that he loved so much".

Mr Rose, a Conservative, lost his seat in May 2017 to current councillor, Lib Dem Liz Leffman.



Fleeces white as snow

Scrap that! Overturned lorry causes chaos

A SCRAP lorry caused havoc after overturning on the A420 near Faringdon, shedding its load across the carriageway.

Bits of old cars, sheets of corrugated iron and a drainpipe were among the tonnes of scrap metal strewn across the road on Wednesday last week.

The crash, which also involved a car, happened at around 3pm and the road reopened at about 6pm following an extensive clean-up operation.

Police, who diverted traffic through Longcot village, drafted in a tractor to help scoop up the debris.

No one was hurt in the incident.



NEW-BORN lambs had to be wrapped up warm after a popular annual lambing event was cancelled as snow hit the county once again.

The popular Earth Trust event, based in Little Wittenham in south Oxfordshire, drew in hundreds of visitors on Saturday but was called off the following day due to the weather.

Spring might be just round the corner but a post on the trust's website read: "We are really sorry but we will not be able to open the farm today [Sunday] for our festival.

"We are really sorry if you were still planning on braving the snow.

"We do not take these decisions lightly but the safety of our visitors, staff and volunteers is our priority. And of course the lambs are all cosy in

their sheds! We will be open as usual next weekend. We really hope you will be able to join us then."

Those who made it to the ecological charity on Saturday were able to meet the trust's popular piglets and goats.

Last year, 8,500 people ventured to the trust for the event as it showed off its new lambs.

Jayne Manley, the trust's CEO, said last week that funds raised from the events would be 'vital' to supporting their work.

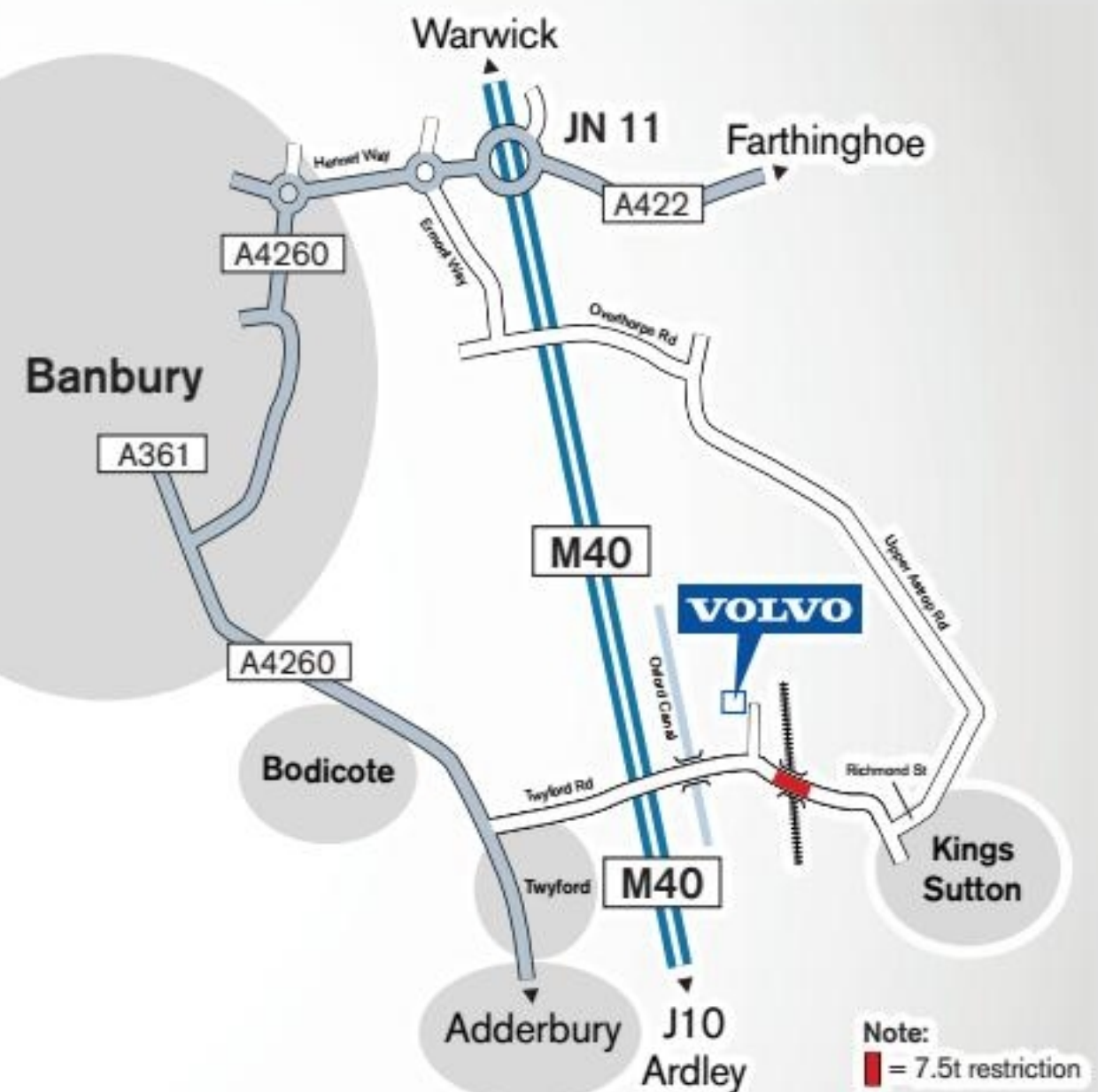
"Lambing is a fundraising event and by coming along you will be helping to support our important work caring for much-loved local green spaces, and connecting people with the natural world."

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Pupil numbers sufficient for eco school to set date

By George Welch

OXFORDSHIRE'S first eco school, which delayed opening for two years after failing to recruit enough students, has announced it will finally open in September.

Gagle Brook School was built at Elmsbrook, the first phase of the north west Bicester eco settlement, in 2016 and was due to open that year but was delayed until 2017. It was postponed again due to low registration numbers.

But operator The White Horse Federation revealed last week that it has set a concrete opening date of September 4.

It also announced that the school, which has been empty for months, will initially only provide reception and nursery provision.

Nick Capstick, CEO of TWHF, said: "We have great ambitions for the school, so while current admissions are limited to reception and nursery-aged children we look forward to accepting admissions for additional year groups once class sizes ensure we are able to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum for the benefit of every pupil."

The school will be led by headteacher Alan Derry, who has been working



Alan Derry, headteacher of soon-to-be open Gagle Brook School

during the delay as interim principal at sister school Southwold Primary School in Holm Way.

Pupils will be taught a curriculum heavily based on the environment and sustainability, as the school has been built to have a minimal carbon footprint.

Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles, responsible for education at Oxfordshire County Council, said last week's announcement "is really great news for everyone associated with Elmsbrook, north west Bicester".

"Through the combined efforts of The White Horse Federation and Oxfordshire County Council, Gagle Brook Primary School will be the

first new school to open and serve this new community in Bicester, set in a purpose-built sustainable environment."

The £6.8million school failed to open last year after only attracting interest from 10 potential students.

According to the county council, Gagle Brook can accept up to 30 pupils from September.

A parents and community evening will be held at the school at 6pm today (Thursday).

Applications for a place in reception class at the start of the academic year are still being accepted. Visit gaglebrook.org.uk for more information.

Burglar stole car from dead neighbour

A MAN who 'callously' broke into his dead neighbour's flat and stole his car will be sentenced on Monday.

Peter Saville, also known as Peter Currie, of no fixed abode, was living in a neighbouring flat to the deceased man in London Road, Wheatley at the time of the incident.

The 40-year-old pleaded guilty to four burglary and driving offences at an Oxford Magistrates' Court appearance on Thursday last week.

Saville broke into the man's flat on Tuesday, March 6, and stole cash and car keys before taking his vehicle from the car park outside.

In court he admitted burglary, taking a motor vehicle without the owner's consent, driving a motor vehicle otherwise than in accordance with a licence and using a motor vehicle on a road/public place without third party insurance.

Investigating Officer, Detective Sergeant Aidan Donohoe, described the offence as "callous".

"Saville has taken advantage of the death of the victim to enter his flat and steal a small amount of cash and keys to the deceased's car."

Saville was charged with the offence on March 8 and will be sentenced at Oxford Magistrates' Court on Monday.



middle of February.

The farm will be open this weekend for anyone who missed out.

Visit earthtrust.org.uk for more information on the trust.

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News



Picture perfect for Amy

By George Welch

A 'SHY' photographer is making bold progress after scooping a prestigious military accolade.

Amy Lupton was 'shocked' to be awarded the Apprentice of the Year Award earlier this month.

The delighted senior aircraftwoman said: "I was attending a conference at RAF Halton [in Aylesbury] when my Sergeant phoned and told me that the instructors from the school had asked if they could nominate me.

"I didn't really think much of it at the time, so when I was told that I'd won I was pretty shocked."

She added that she has 'loved' her experience at Benson, her first posting. Amy arrived at the south Oxfordshire base in September 2016 after graduating from the Defence School of Photography in Cosford, Shropshire.

Her primary task is technical photography but she has recently been working on a project celebrating the centenary of the RAF.

What Amy does is no ordinary job. Her skills ensure that RAF Benson correctly documents the process of fixing aircraft from start to finish as well as a historical record of events.

"The skills that I've learnt, I never expected to learn," she said.

"The different sides of photography, medical and dental, crime scenes and the diversity is what I wanted to join the RAF for.

"I've also gained confidence; I'm still quite a shy and retiring person, but when you get put in front of a hundred people for a group photo, you've got to make yourself known and heard.

"I'm still trying to improve on that, but it's definitely built my confidence."

The apprentice award is not the first achievement nor expected to be the last for Amy, who won the Student Mallett Trophy at the RAF Photographic Competition in 2016.

She attended the Annual Apprentice



of the Year Awards in London with her family and fellow RAF Benson photographer, Sergeant Rachel Malthouse, to accept the award.

Amy Lupton herself caught on camera at work, won the Apprentice of the Year Award Pictures: Cpl Neil Champman

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News



Non-urgent ops resume at JR

THE John Radcliffe Hospital has restarted its adult non-urgent operations three months after the NHS declared a black alert to combat severe operational pressures on the service.

Paul Brennan, director of clinical services at Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, said: "I would like to thank our patients for bearing with us during this exceptionally busy period and to apologise once more."

Inpatient elective operations resumed on Wednesday (March 21).

Meanwhile it was revealed patients waited for more than 12 hours at A&E departments in Oxfordshire on 50 occasions in a single week in January.

The figure was "significantly above the number reported for many years", an Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (OUH) report said.

In total, there were 53 occasions when patients at OUH's A&E departments at Horton General Hospital in Banbury and the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford waited for more than 12 hours before admission in January.

The figure was the sixth highest recorded by any NHS trust in England in January as the health service battled a cold winter.

Mr Brennan said the trust regretted the waits experienced by patients.

More harassment claims against Oxfam

UNDER pressure charity Oxfam has been accused of further safeguarding failures after a senior aid worker was kept in the earthquake-torn Haiti for more than a year, despite reported sexual harassment claims.

An internal report seen by The

Times alleged a cover up for sexual harassment claims against aid worker Raphael Mutiku.

According to The Times, Mutiku received a final written warning in June 2010 after accusations of harassing female colleagues.

Don't be fooled by cute faces of crime-fighting Cocker Spaniels

By George Welch

YOYO the Cocker Spaniel might look cute but he strikes fear in to the hearts of criminals who trade illegal tobacco in Oxfordshire - and now 23-week-old puppy Maggie is following in his footsteps.

Five-year-old Yoyo was trained from a young age to detect tobacco and help trading standards teams across the country combat the menace of black market tobacco dealers.

Yoyo demonstrated his prowess at a special event in Bonn Square in Oxford to mark National No Smoking Day on Wednesday last week.

Trading Standards officers were on hand to pass on information to the public about how to spot illegal tobacco, what the dangers are and how to report sales.

Meanwhile, Maggie the puppy, who was born late last year, was watching on as she embarks on her six-month training period before reporting for duty on the canine frontline.

Stuart Phillips, who trains Yoyo, Maggie and other sniffer dogs, said: "They're lovely animals but criminals should beware - they miss nothing!"

Illegal tobacco is the supply, distribution and sale of tobacco products that are either counterfeit or have been smuggled or bootlegged in to the UK.

Cllr Judith Heathcoat, deputy leader of Oxfordshire County Council, described the organised crime as 'a real menace'.

She said: "Many years ago it may not have been fully understood just how harmful tobacco is. Those days are long gone."

"Illegal tobacco is a real menace



- it is sold at pocket money prices by people indulging in criminal activity to young people."

She added: "This is organised crime with health implications and we're determined to stay on the case in terms of deterring it."

"The sniffer dogs are lovely friendly

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Con man fined for cheating OAP

PEOPLE across Oxfordshire are being asked to join a national campaign to confront cold-calling fraudsters after a Faringdon man conned a vulnerable elderly person in Littlemore.

David Smith was given a 24-month sentence, suspended for a year, for conning his victim out of £5,000 for poor work on his house and garden.

Trading as AS Garden Services, Smith cold-called his victim last September and charged him £5,000 for work on his driveway, guttering, gate and garden.

The work was of a very poor standard and in some instances was found to be worthless.

The victim received no paperwork relating to the work carried out.

Smith pleaded guilty to committing fraud by false representation at Oxford Magistrates' Court on Tuesday last week.

He was living in Faringdon at the time of the offences but has since moved to Botley in Oxford.

Smith was also ordered to pay £3,000 compensation to his victim and £1,000 towards the prosecution

costs of Oxfordshire County Council's trading standards team who led the investigation. He also has to carry out 100 hours of unpaid work.

The national Friends Against Scams campaign helps communities work together to combat people who set out to con vulnerable people.

Visit friendsagainstscams.org.uk for more information.

Colleges clash over plans for 'inelegant' tower

TWO Oxford University colleges clashed over 'bulky' and 'inelegant' redevelopment designs.

Plans to revamp a St Hilda's College building with a tower, student rooms, a common room, offices and a porters lodge were approved at an Oxford City Council planning meeting last week.

Nearby Christ Church College, which has 33 listed buildings and structures, objected to the project, saying it would have "significant implications for the setting of the college".

In particular, the college claimed the tower risked damaging views from Christ Church Meadow, a Grade I-listed park.

In planning documents, Christ Church described the development as "inelegant and bulky", adding that the tower would break city rules.

The tower would exceed high

building guidance in Oxford because it would be 19.6m high, eight per cent higher than the guidance of 18.2m.

The Oxford Preservation Trust stressed that, while it is not opposed to new spires or towers being added to the Oxford skyline, any addition "needs to be handled with greatest care".

However, city council planning chiefs approved the designs, with documents describing plans as "thoughtful", adding that "the tower would not be an intrusive element within the skyline".

The committee will reconvene once St Hilda's has addressed the concerns over the towers.

The new buildings at St Hilda's College have been given the go-ahead despite concerns from Christ Church



Dog trainer Stuart Phillips with trading standards officers and Yoyo and Maggie

animals but they're also highly skilled and they are absolutely invaluable."

In the South-East, illegal tobacco had a street value of around £37million in 2010.

Visit tinyurl.com/yc68ktvd for more information and to report illegal tobacco.

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Dad and daughter run to say thank you

A DAUGHTER will run with her dad in the London marathon to raise vital funds for the Oxfordshire hospice that cared for her nan after she was diagnosed with cancer.

The duo are hoping to raise £1,500 for Sobell House when they go on the run on April 22.

Rebecca Foster, 29, from Banbury, secured a charity place in the world famous marathon alongside her father, a seasoned veteran when it comes to

marathon races.

Vince Foster, 53, who lives in Carterton, will run with a ballot place, choosing to also raise funds for Sobell House, who cared for his mum when she was diagnosed with cancer in 2016.

Rebecca said: "When my nan was diagnosed with cancer we were given endless support by the Sobell House team.

"We really wanted to give something back and raise money

for the hospice.

"My dad has run lots of marathons before but this is my first one and it's incredibly daunting since the most I have ever run is 7k, and I only started running just over a year ago."

Sobell House fundraiser Kevin Game said £1.6million is needed every year to run the hospice and is "grateful to all of our runners".

Donations can be made via JustGiving at: <http://bit.ly/2DINEtF>

City map shows clean energy

OXFORD has become the first area in the UK to feature on a new map that allows councils and organisations to showcase methods they are using to move towards 100 per cent clean energy by 2050.

Cllr John Tanner, Oxford City Council's board member for a Clean and Green Oxford, attended the launch of the UK100 Local Power Map at the House of Commons last month.

The map means every UK100 member, a total of 84 local authorities, community groups and businesses, can promote their efforts to shift away from dirty fossil fuels.

It is hoped this will encourage all users to show the benefits of using clean energy for everyday actions.

Cllr Tanner said: "We need a country-wide map to show what clean power there is already and what more needs to be done. But we need even more local green energy to create the zero carbon communities of the future."

Oxford plans a Zero Emission Zone in the city centre from 2020, lots more electric charging points and new crowd-funded clean energy projects.

You can see Oxford's projects at oxford.uk100.org

InBrief

Mortgage scheme

PEOPLE looking to build their own homes will be offered an accessible mortgage under a new pilot scheme launched by Cherwell District Council.

Under the scheme - thought to be the first of its kind in the UK - the council will indemnify up to 20 per cent of each mortgage.

From April 3, residents will be able to apply for accessible mortgages on homes at Graven Hill in Bicester, the UK's largest custom-build site.

Cllr Barry Wood, leader of the council, said the scheme "will make it easier for people to build their own home without needing vast sums set aside to cover building costs".

However, criteria specifies that

applicants must have a connection with the Cherwell district.

Further information will be available on the council's website in the lead up to April 3.

Could you escape?

AN escape room experience in which people attempt to solve clues and puzzles to get out of locked room, could be coming to the Westgate.

Escape Hunt, which has 250 branches worldwide across six continents, wants to open an Oxford outlet.

According to its website it is 'coming soon' to Oxford and the firm has submitted a premises licence application to Oxford City Council.

Visit escapehunt.com for more information.

Iconic helmets set to return to our streets

By George Welch

THE sight of an 'old fashioned bobby' is set to return to Oxfordshire with the reintroduction of custodian helmets.

Just under £30,000 is being spent on bringing back the traditional helmets across the Thames Valley.

Thames Valley Police confirmed the return of the headgear, which will be rolled out across the Force over the coming months, last week.

Female officers will continue to wear their uniform bowler hats.

Anthony Stansfeld, the Police and Crime Commissioner, is bringing them back for the first time since 2009, saying they make police more approachable and visible.

He said: "I have felt very strongly for a number of years that officers patrolling the streets of Thames Valley need to be more visible.

"I believe that wearing the custodian helmet not only increases visibility but also makes them more approachable and provides greater reassurance to the public.

"The custodian helmet is an iconic symbol of British policing, still used by a number of metropolitan police forces, and



Feedback on reintroducing helmets has been good from both police officers and the public

I am delighted that they will be returning to the streets of Thames Valley."

According to TVP, during a trial in Reading, officers said the new addition had prompted more interaction from the public, possibly because they no longer 'look like a traffic warden'.

Others said they found the helmets more comfortable and more professional looking.

Chief Constable Francis Habgood said: "We have carried out a limited trial on the use of custodian helmets in Reading and the feedback from both officers and the public has been resoundingly in favour of bringing

them back.

"This is something that the Police and Crime Commissioner has been very supportive of and I can confirm that I have approved the initial order for new helmets.

"The helmets will be provided to male uniformed officers and will start to be rolled out over the coming months."

However, critics believe the cash would be better spent elsewhere.

TVP Federation chairman Craig O'Leary said the money would be better spent on health and welfare provision for officers, while Oxford City Council's community safety lead Tom Hayes described the decision as "bonkers".

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News

Pullman books to be TV show

PHILIP Pullman's hit book series His Dark Materials will be reborn as a BBC TV adaptation.

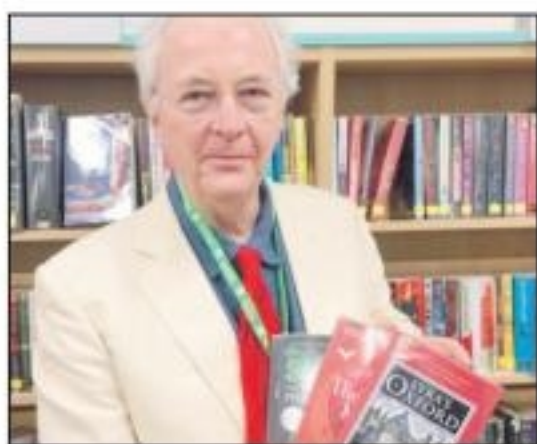
The Oxford author's fantastical tale will be retold in an eight-part series with production set to begin in Wales 'soon'.

Cardiff-based production company Bad Wolf is behind the adaptation, with Oxford, one of the key settings of the series, one of the filming locations.

Logan star Dafne Keen has been named as the young actress who will play the lead role of Lyra, the trilogy's much-loved protagonist.

The 12-year-old, who made her acting debut in 2014 in TV series The Refugees, is best known for her role in last year's X-Men film, Logan, where she played X-23, a cloned version of Hugh Jackman's Wolverine.

His Dark Materials is made up of novels Northern Lights, The Subtle Knife and The Amber Spyglass.



Hollywood superstars Daniel Craig and Nicole Kidman starred in a 2007 big screen version of Northern Lights, with Dakota Blue Richards playing Lyra, although the film was not critically acclaimed.

Pullman published La Belle Sauvage, the first volume in The Book of Dust trilogy, last year.

The story covers the events leading up to Lyra's arrival as a six-month-old baby at Jordan College, Oxford.

InBrief

Toys R Us to close

TOYS R Us on Botley Road, Oxford, will shut its doors for good within the next six weeks.

Administrators from Moorfields have been unable to find a buyer to rescue the chain's 100 stores.

More than 3,000 people will lose their jobs as Toys R Us stores across the UK wind down.

The High Street giant collapsed in February after it struggled to pay a £15million tax bill.

Van safety event

VAN drivers are invited to an event aimed at improving the safety of vans on the city's roads.

The Freight Transport Association's Van Excellence Briefings, to be held at the Kassam Stadium on April 12, are open to anyone who owns or operates vans, from individual builders to large delivery firms.

Visit tinyurl.com/y8udn9zz to book and for more information.

Charity of the year 2018 – Helen & Douglas House

Bringing out the best in children with play

By George Welch

PLAYTIME for children with life-limiting conditions at Helen House just got a lot more fun and inclusive following a generous donation of 'magical' specialist technology worth thousands of pounds.

Children's charity Lifelites gave our charity of the year the package of assistive equipment worth £50,000 to help children play games with their family and carers, be creative with art and music and improve communication.

Play is one of the most important parts of childhood and for those who are unwell or have disabilities it becomes even more important to develop communication, build confidence and learn new skills.

One of the pieces of equipment donated was an Eyegaze package which allows those with limited mobility to control a computer using just their eyes.

By using the Eyegaze, children who can only use their eyes and struggle to control anything for themselves are suddenly able to play a game, paint a picture or even communicate with their family and carers, perhaps for the first time.

Other items donated include several brand new iPads in special drop proof easy grip cases and a touchscreen computer, as well as lots of games and other software



Helen House nurse Emma and Theo playing with the elephant

specially designed to be accessible for children with disabilities. Lifelites will replace the equipment every four years.

Helen House manager Kathy Patching, said the 'invaluable' donation will help 'bring out the very best' in the children.

She said: "A young man called Theo who was staying with us when the equipment arrived finds it quite difficult to concentrate and to engage, but he quickly picked up on one of Lifelites' toy elephants that caught his attention."

"Already it has made a difference

to him. He has found something that is new, that is different, and is unique to him.

"I can't say a big enough thank you to Lifelites for being so generous."

Lifelites chief executive Simone Enefer-Doy said: "The magical technology we have donated can be used to play, to be creative and communicate, and enrich the lives of these children and their families, for as long as it is possible."

To donate to Helen & Douglas House go to helenanddouglas.org.uk



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David Wilson Homes assistant site manager Lewis Beech with children at the Oxford High School event

Pupils building for a career in construction

OXFORD school pupils hoping to build a career in construction took part in an event encouraging the young engineers to consider maths and science roles in the industry.

Lord Mayor of Oxford councillor Jean Fooks, and David Wilson Homes assistant site manager Lewis Beech, attended the Juniors in Engineering, Maths and Science event at Oxford High School earlier this month.

More than 60 year five pupils were able to ask Lewis about roles in construction, while Cllr Fooks helped judge a team building exercise.

Cllr Fooks said: "As a scientist myself, I was very pleased to see the children clearly enjoying the challenges set before them in the fields of construction and chemistry."

Maria Whittington from the science department at the school said: "We are delighted to have

a well-known housebuilder like David Wilson Homes support our event and were thrilled that Lewis could attend to talk to the pupils about construction.

"He had a great deal to say about construction – including the mechanics and the wide scope for jobs and the pupils were very interested in what he had to say."

The developer contributed £250 to the event for materials and expenses on the day.



ENJOY THE TRUE VALUE OF YOUR HOME

Recent data reveals the staggering potential wealth available to the UK's elderly homeowners

Property becomes an increasingly important component of your wealth as you age, and this has never been truer with low interest rates affecting savings and pensions underperforming.

Nevertheless, research by the Council of Mortgage Lenders (CML) indicates that over-55 UK homeowners could be sitting on a goldmine with their accumulated property wealth calculated to total £2.5 trillion¹. To place this figure in context, the UK's elderly homeowners could potentially access more wealth than the GDP of France (£2.4 trillion), according to the latest IMF projections².

However, the CML report also indicates that mortgage debt is rising fastest amongst older households, plus incomes traditionally drop in later life. The question is how can this asset wealth be used to benefit you?

Accessing a portion of the equity stored in your home now could provide you with a timely financial boost in later life. If you're a UK homeowner over the age of 55, you may be eligible for a Lifetime Mortgage that could see you access as little as £10,000 of the wealth in your property – a tiny fraction in light of the statistics above – which could help you clear any existing mortgage debts, and provide you with financial security and freedom in retirement.

A Lifetime Mortgage allows you to convert some of the value of your property into a tax-free cash sum, without having to give up ownership of your home. Lifetime Mortgage plans have no fixed-end date and come with no required monthly repayments, so the funds you release are yours to spend as you wish. The mortgage and accrued interest are not due for repayment until both you and your partner either pass away or both enter long-term care.

If you are concerned about the build-up of the loan value over time, plans are available that allow you to pay off up to 10pc of the mortgage balance each year without penalty. This can help offset the interest accrued and help to secure some of the property's wealth for your future use.

What's more, with plans from Equity Release Council-approved lenders you will benefit from the safety of the no-negative equity guarantee, ensuring that you and your family will never owe more than the value of your home. Plans from approved lenders also allow you the option of moving to a suitable alternative property, subject to the lender's criteria.

On top of this, competitive rates of fixed interest are available, which allow you to get an accurate projection, so you know exactly what is happening with your money at all times.

There's no need to face the golden years of retirement with the clouds of mortgage debt or limited incomes looming on the horizon. After years of responsible saving and hard work, your property could provide you with the financial boost to face the future with confidence, so you can have the retirement you deserve.

¹Source: Council of Mortgage Lenders, 'Later life borrowing, New mindsets: old silos', June 2017, p.23.

²Source: IMF World Economic Outlook, April 2017.



Could equity release help you? For more information call now and speak to Andy Pike at his Oxford Office - 01865 378718

Impartial Advice

The advice from Andy Pike was both impartial and informed. It helped satisfy any concerns I had about the implications of equity release. I can recommend Responsible Equity Release to anyone. - Julia Annand, 25th October 2017.



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Out&About Competition

WIN a visit to an 'out of this world' golf experience



ALIEN planetary landing sites, black holes and space ships have all appeared next to the Kassam Stadium as adventure golf goes interstellar.

There is now a pair of new space-themed 18-hole golf courses on the first floor of the Ozone Leisure Complex in Blackbird Leys.

Competitors have to negotiate their way around five zones, putting balls on a space dock, inside a spaceship, in outer space, on a Mars landing site and in an unknown, mysterious forest planet.

It was one of the first space-themed adventure golf courses in the whole of the UK when it opened in February 17th, says Alistair Burnett founder of the company Gravitee Golf.

He said: "People have done jungle, dinosaur and underwater themes but this is the first time anyone has tackled a 36-hole space adventure."

"It involves an amazing UV room, plus crashed space ships, aliens, rockets, a black hole and a Red Planet scape for the space adventurers..."

"It's looking absolutely brilliant."

Mr Burnett said adventure golf is rising in popularity amongst people

Closing date: Monday, April 3, 2018

who want something different from the more-established leisure activities such as going to the pub, cinema or bowling alley.

"If you are looking for something fun to do there's not always a whole lot of choice. We wanted to offer something that's a bit different to the norm, whatever your age. We welcome families with small children and grandparents or groups of friends for a stag-do, or as part of a team-building exercise with work colleagues."

"We have party rooms and meeting spaces so people can come and play and then hang out afterwards."

Mr Burnett said 'adventure golf' differs from its seaside sibling 'mini golf' because it is themed and has a storyline, which adventurers can follow

as they work their way around.

He added: "It really takes things to next level with so much more going on, it is really exciting."

For more information see www.graviteegolf.com

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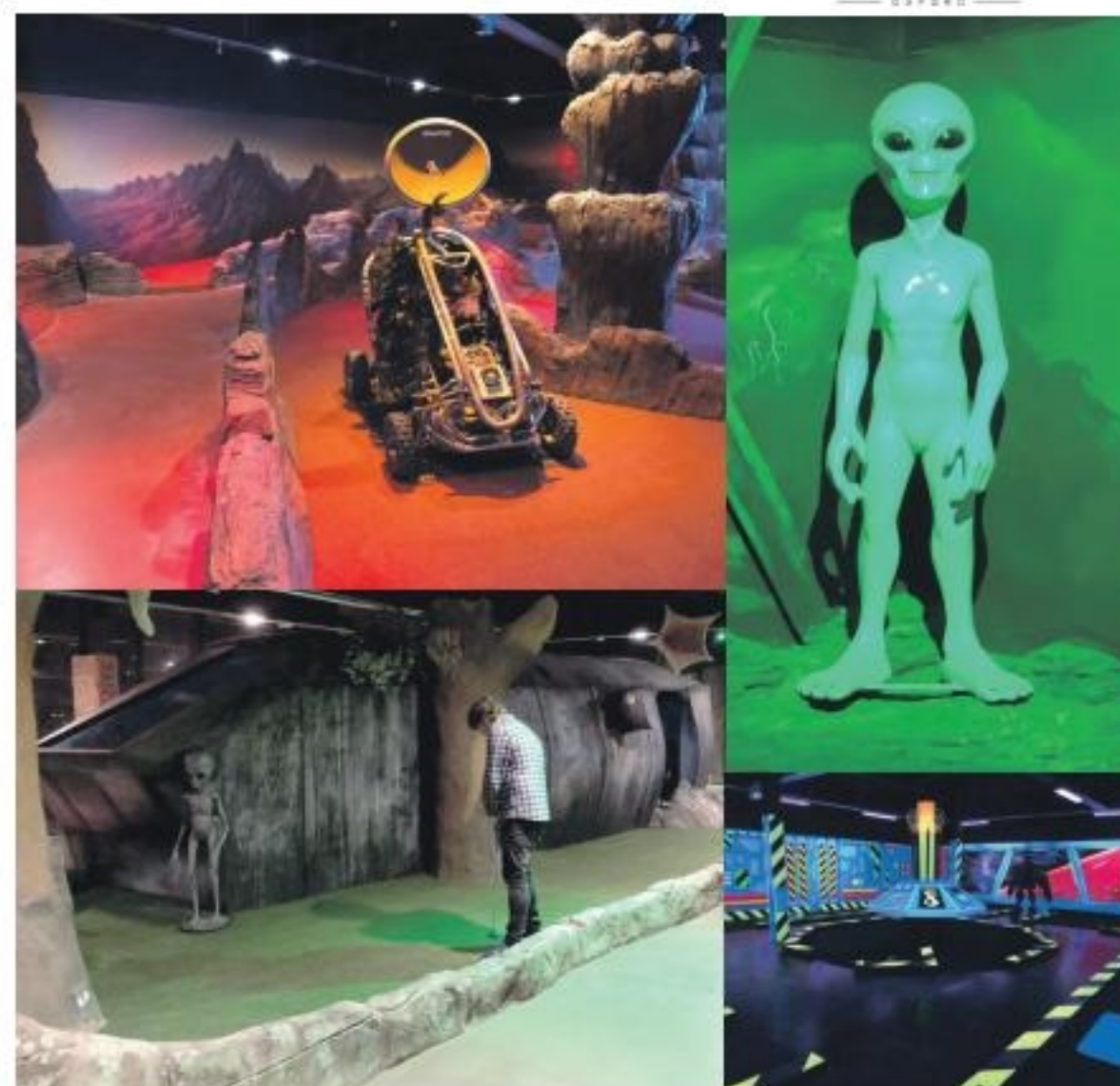
We have teamed up with Gravitee Golf to organise a round of golf for 5 people on both courses with 2 pizzas to share afterwards.

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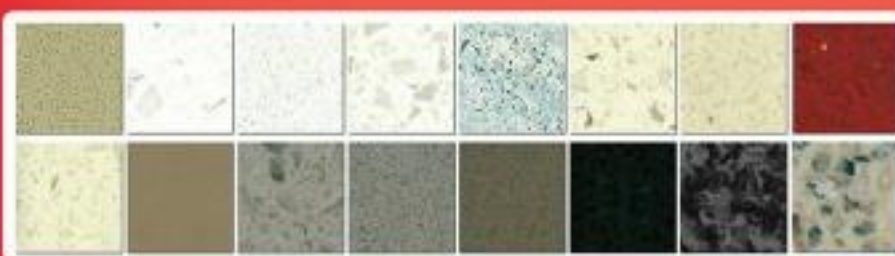
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Three stories tell tales of Great War experiences

By Josh Cox

IT'S 1978 – sixty years since the end of the Great War. Three people are drawn together to be interviewed for a documentary on the realities of their experiences during the conflict. A soldier, an officer, and a nursing volunteer.

Together they use the platform to push against the culture that is telling them how to feel about their experiences; a culture that is in the process of building the myth around them.

Forty years later, their recollections are finally to be broadcast – the myth now written.

Based on real experiences of First World War veterans, *A More Perfect World*, takes place in three different time zones – 2018, 1978 and during the years of the First World War.

It's three plays in one; three characters with three distinct stories and experiences.

These actual experiences ensure the play is bold in its objective; to give a voice to those experiences of the First World War that did not fall into the accepted mythology of the conflict, therefore challenging that



mythology.

When asked about the subject matter of the play which runs at Abingdon's Unicorn Theatre next month, director Maria Crocker said:

"I have a history of army theatre and the army in general with many members of my family serving. My grand parents were active in the First World War and that is where they met. So *A More Perfect World* has a sense of my history in it as well."

She added: "With three different time zones being portrayed on the Unicorn's tiny stage, and with two of those zones with the same characters, this has been a fantastic challenge."

"With Abingdon Drama Club's brilliant pool of talent, cast and crew, we have met that challenge and passed with flying colours."

Fascinating and thought provoking, in equal measure, *A More Perfect World* is a must see for drama lovers and historians alike.

A More Perfect World, written by Tony Green and directed by Maria Crocker runs at The Unicorn Theatre in Abingdon from Wednesday April 11 April until Saturday April 14.

The play is unsuitable for children under 12 years. Tickets are £10.

To book either Email tickets@unicornboxoffice.org.uk or call the box office on 0845 4636638



Love, treachery and death in song

IT has been 45 years since Liege & Lief almost single-handedly created the genre 'folk-rock'.

Since then, that simple marriage of traditional music and electric instruments has been sidetracked, dissected and thoroughly documented.

However, giving a fresh approach yet remaining faithful to the genre is five-piece band TRADarr, who will be coming to the Unicorn Theatre in Abingdon on April 5.

The band is comprised of a small group of talented musicians who have been playing for a combined total of more than 60 years. This includes: PJ

Wright, Mark Stevens, Guy Fletcher, Marion Fleetwood and Gregg Cave.

After the success of their first album, *Cautionary Tales*, work has finished on the band's second album, *Further Tales of Love! Treachery! and Death!* which has been released through Proper Records with radio airplay including BBC Radio 2's Folk Show.

Folk Radio UK recently proclaimed that TRADarr are "a band bursting with ideas".

The doors open at 7pm with the music starting at 7.15pm. Tickets are £15.

To book or for more information visit musicattheunicorn.org.uk

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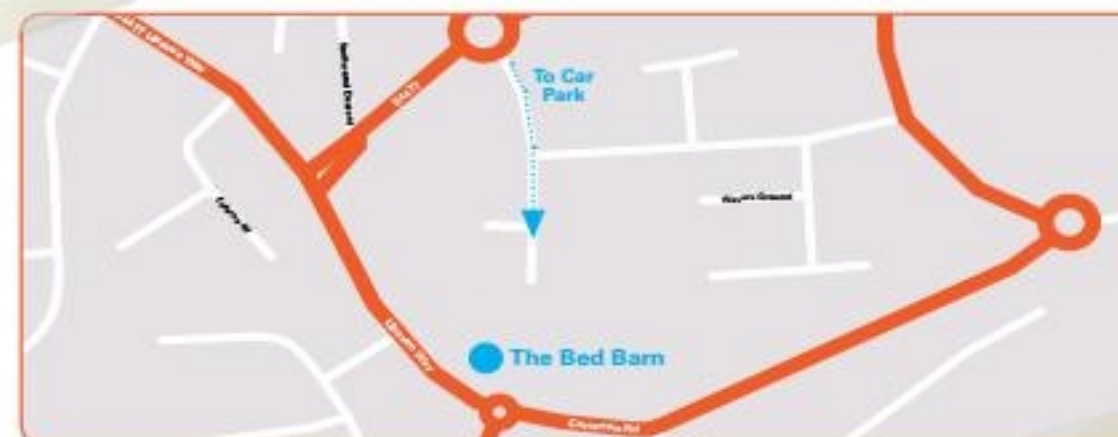
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Friday 30th March: **10am – 4pm**,
Saturday 31st March: **10am – 5pm**,
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Christie at nerve-jangling best with little-known play

By Samantha McGregor

A WHIRLWIND romance with a handsome and charming stranger sweeps Cecily Harrington off her feet and she recklessly abandons her old life to settle in the remote and blissful surroundings of a country cottage.

However, her newfound love is not all that he seems in this new production of Agatha Christie's 'nerve jangling' *Love From A Stranger*.

Now showing at the Oxford Playhouse by theatre company Fiery Angel, the play is directed by Lucy Bailey, who also led *Gaslight* and *Dial M for Murder*.

Lucy, who also directed *Titus Andronicus* at Shakespeare's Globe in 2014, hadn't heard of the play

when she was first approached by Fiery Angel.

She said: "What attracted me was the dark undercurrents and how relevant it is, how we don't know people and what erotic addiction and compulsion blinds us in our lives."

"The successful liar is what's so fascinating to Christie."

"The story could happen any time. We are updating it to the late fifties, but it could be set now."

"People go with their lovers to isolated places to have a romance. It absolutely is current."

The play actually started out as a short story – *Philomel Cottage* – and was published in 1934 as part of the collection *The Listerdale Mystery*.

Christie wrote a theatre adapta-

tion which was not performed and then Frank Vosper, a rising star of the stage and screen, spied a great lead role for himself and worked up a sharper version.

It was a hit in the West End in 1936, then had a shorter run in New York. Alas, on the ocean liner home in March 1937, Vosper contrived one night to topple through a porthole and drown in the Atlantic. An open verdict was returned at the inquest.

This production, "electric with suspense" with a "shocking twist" runs until Saturday.

Tickets for *Love From A Stranger* at Oxford Playhouse start at £10 and are available from the Ticket Office on 01865 305305 or book online at oxfordplayhouse.com

Sam Frenchum and Helen Bradbury in *Love From A Stranger*
Picture: Sheila Burnett



Review Creating a real sense of terror in bookshop production of *Dracula*

THERE'S still time to see Creation Theatre's latest production, an adaptation of Bram Stoker's classic gothic horror *Dracula*.

We went to see the play on a wet rainy evening, but the inclement weather only made it more atmospheric – the boat that brought *Dracula* to Whitby came ashore in a storm.

Set in the seaside town in the 1950s, the play is staged in the basement of Blackwells Bookshop among books on law and theology and the team has made clever use of their surroundings, moving the play to different areas to change the focus.

With a cast of just two, it tells the

story of newly-weds Mina and Jonathan, played by Sophie Greenham and Christopher York.

Jonathan comes back from Transylvania a changed man and their friend Lucy has died of a mystery illness.

Piece by piece through recordings, diary entries, letters and newspaper

articles, the pair unpick the story of the Count.

Although the audience does not see Count *Dracula* during the production, you are certainly aware of his presence through a mix of narrative and audio visual special effects.

Creation's *Dracula* is a thoughtful production with just the right mix

of tension, pace, humour as well as a sprinkle of terror. Once again, a Creation must-see.

You can catch the production until April 14. Tickets cost from £12 and are available from Creation's box office on 01865 766266 or go to creationtheatre.co.uk

Samantha McGregor

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Out About

Indian with a modern twist

By Karen Neville

WHO doesn't love Indian food? While most of us have a favourite eaterie there's a new one in Oxford that takes Indian cuisine to a new level.

Cinnamon Kitchen opened at the Westgate towards the end of last year and has now introduced a two and three course set lunch and dinner menu that makes taking a break from shopping all the more worthwhile.

Celebrating the diversity of the subcontinent the newly-created dishes showcase Cinnamon Kitchen's modern Indian cuisine.

We stopped in on a snowy day recently and were definitely in need of something to warm us after the winter walk.

The restaurant itself is light and airy and offers plenty of space between tables.

Opting for comfy banquette seating we enjoyed a glass of Prosecco while we decided on our lunch.

The set menu features some real showstoppers and some firm favourites and we decided on the achari lamb fillet on spinach roti with anchovy chutney and grilled chicken skewer, labna, pomengranate and toasted buckwheat.

Not only did both taste like no Indian dishes we had tried before, subtle flavours packed with taste and



a treat for the eyes - the pomegranate seeds glistening like rubies, made you want to dive in.

Moving on the mains, we were attracted to the Tandoori trio - paneer tikka, achari cauliflower and padron pepper and old Delhi style butter chicken with pilau rice.

Again as much a feast for the eyes as for the palate and who knew cauliflower could taste so good! All three elements of the trio had a delicious smoky hint and the chicken was rich and moist in a light butter sauce which we eagerly dipped our peshwari naan into.

All was perfectly cooked, spiced

and seasoned, leaving you wanting to come back for more.

Light refreshing desserts were the order of the day after and the mango and strawberry sorbets delivered on that score. We also tried the carrot halwa treacle tart with thandai sorbet - a sticky but light treat not unlike a carrot cake.

At £21 for three courses it was money very well spent for lunch (an evening version is available for £28 with a glass of Prosecco).

With the promise of lunch here on future shopping tips I may even persuade my husband to come shopping with me again.



Achari lamb fillet,
spinach roti,
anchovy chutney



Raj Kachori,
a crisp pastry
shell filled with
sprouted mung,
fenugreek,
pickled kachum-
ber and spiced
yoghurt

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"I honestly believe that Colourfence is the best general purpose fencing product on the market today!"

Anna Richardson

Get ready for Winter

Now's the perfect time to replace your garden fence once and for all. Anna Ryder Richardson - Designer and Television Presenter - takes a closer look at Colourfence, the revolutionary low-maintenance system.

It's been ten years since I regularly graced TV screens helping transform people's living spaces with MDF and stripped floorboards. Recently it's been more "celebrity muck out" than "celebrity make-over" as I took up the challenge of owning my own Wildlife Zoo in Tenby. In this time I've learnt quite a lot about fences and having researched the various options for my own benefit I thought I would share my knowledge with a wider audience.

The latest design processes

mean there is now a tremendous array of fencing products for you to choose from, constructed from a variety of materials. Each has its own attributes, and ultimately it can often come down to a matter of personal preference. For me, there was one unique system that stood out as providing the best balance between price and functionality which eradicates fencing problems for good. Or for at least 25 years. Colourfence. For quality, value, longevity, aesthetic design, this fencing system ticks all the boxes. Fencing made for

the 21st century that will transform the look of your garden which is supplied and fitted by a company whose customer service is as good as the product.

In my view, Colourfence is the 'Rolls Royce' of fencing – just without the exclusive price tag. What's more, it's guaranteed to stay in place in up to 130mph winds and is virtually maintenance free.

To find out how the experts from Colourfence might help you, I suggest you call **01865 582 171** and speak to their team.

Colourfence: The ultimate garden fence?

For many Colourfence is perhaps the ultimate choice. For the last 15 years it's been widely used across the UK and has steadily gained a reputation for its quality. By using the highest specification Colorbond steel in the fence structure itself, complemented by the highest level of customer service from accredited Franchisees, Colourfence is now regarded by many as the premier fencing solution in the market. Immune to the rot and resistant to the weather that so quickly effects wooden fences, Colourfence has none of the drawbacks of wood - plenty of additional benefits and what's more it's better value!

Call **01865 582 171** for more information



Gardeners' Questions

Q Wooden fence panels just don't seem to last - is there a storm resistant alternative?

A The Colourfence system has been tested under cyclonic conditions to withstand storms with wind gusts up to 130mph. Unlike your wooden fence - once professionally installed - Colourfence really will stay up!

Q No matter what I treat my wooden fence with - nothing seems to prevent it rotting or looking shabby for very long.

A Treating your fence is a thankless and expensive task. It's also a losing battle. Wood simply wants to rot. Colourfence offers a low-maintenance alternative where by an occasional wash down will keep it looking great for up to 25 years! **GUARANTEED!**



THIS WEEK'S JOB

*Terms and conditions apply - full details available on request

Head into Winter - with COLOURFENCE

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Every gardener knows that it pays to plan ahead. If you are one of the thousands of people who watched helpless, as winter winds battered their garden, it will not be a surprise that garden fences are almost always the first casualty. Whether you have previously patched, painted or simply prayed to keep your fence going, there's no escaping the fact that timber fences will always fall victim to the weather. With Colourfence you can put your garden straight once and for all. Colourfence is scientifically tested and cyclonically rated to ensure when professionally installed, it can withstand wind gusts of up to

130mph. Once it's up - it stays up and is guaranteed to look good year after year. Safe, extra secure and hassle free - you will NEVER need to paint it, treat it or patch it. An occasional hose down will be all you need to do to keep it in top condition for years to come. In fact the system is so durable that Colourfence will guarantee† their fencing to last at least 25 years. Available in a range of colours to suit any garden, with or without decorative trellis, the highly skilled installation team make short work of their dramatic transformations. Your sad old fence will be efficiently cleared and replaced, leaving you to get

back to enjoying your rejuvenated garden. Pricing is just as straightforward and equally attractive. Starting costs are in line with inferior timber systems but with no annual treatments required, Colourfence saves you time and money each and every year. Their aim is your peace of mind. With a 25 year guarantee† Colourfence speaks for itself and promises a lifetime of hassle-free enjoyment.

For more information and to arrange a FREE no obligation site visit simply call one of their helpful team on 01865 582 171.

COLOURFENCE
the revolutionary low-maintenance system

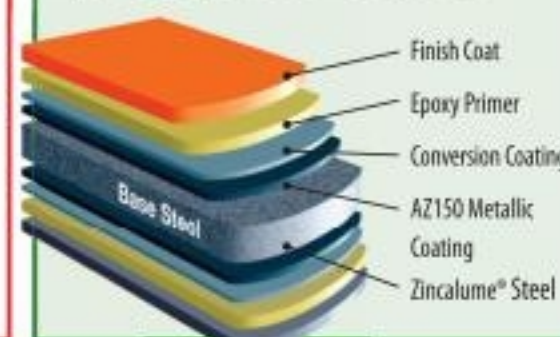
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†Terms and conditions apply - full details available on request

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- Save time & money - no treating required.
- Guaranteed† not to rot, warp or peel for up to 25 years.
- Costs in line with far inferior timber systems
- Variety of colours and sizes available
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Reader travel



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†We have included the current flight price within the above package price. Should the cost of flights change the package price may vary. The final price will be confirmed to you at time of booking.

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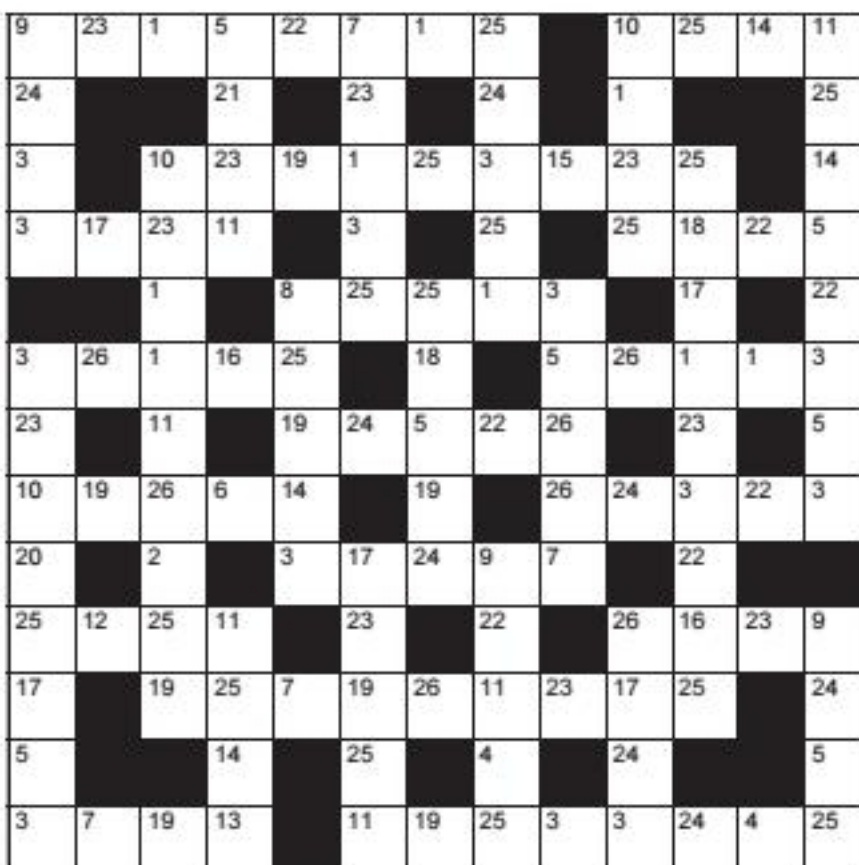


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CROSS CODE

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ



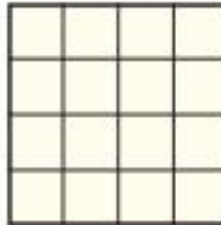
Each number in our Cross Code grid represents a different letter of the alphabet. You have three letters in the control grid to start you off. Enter them in the appropriate squares in the main grid, then use your knowledge of words to work out which letters should go in the missing squares.

As you get the letters, fill in other squares with the same number in the main grid and control grid. Check off the alphabetical list of letters as you identify them.

MAGIC SQUARE

SHIP'S TELEPHONIST

Using all 16 letters of the phrase above, form four words each of four letters which will fit in the grid to form a magic square in which the words can be read both horizontally and vertically.

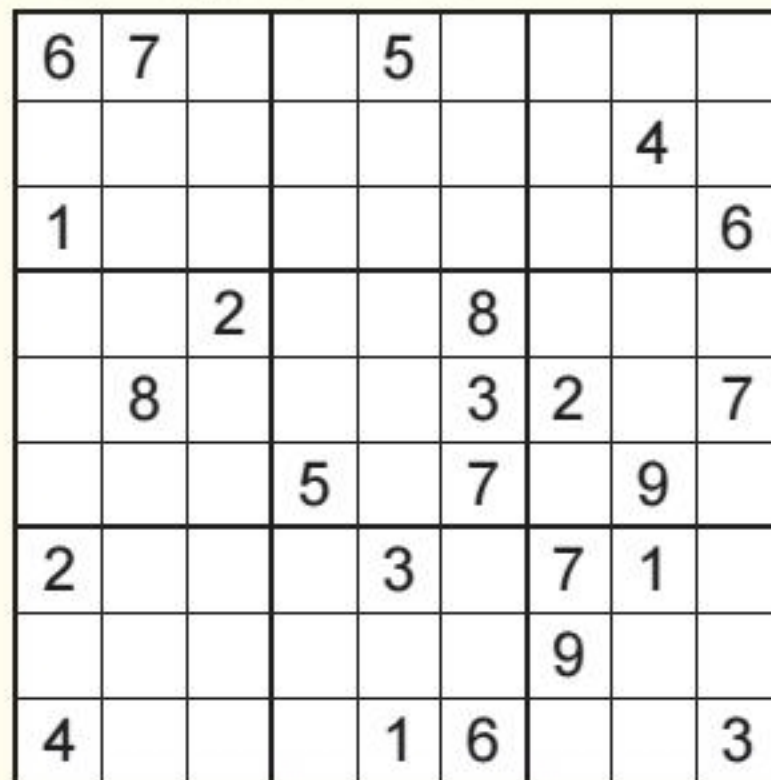
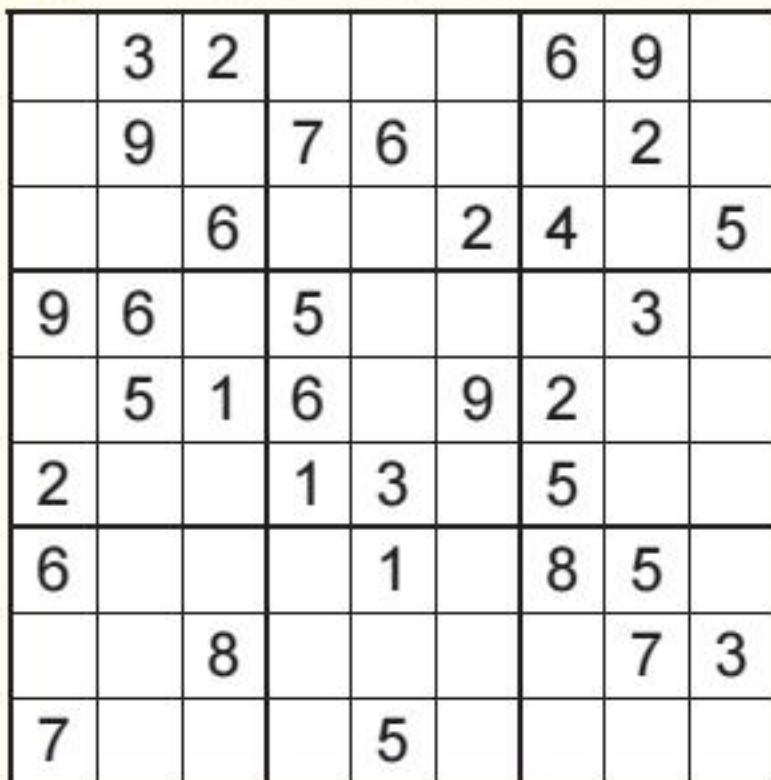


SUDOKU

Easy

Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9, and so must each 3 x 3 box.

Hard



EQUALISER

	6		5	
6	○	3	○	0
	3		3	
3	○	3	○	7
	1		6	

Place the four signs (add, subtract, multiply, divide) one in each circle so that the total of each across and down line is the same. Perform the first calculation in each line first and ignore the mathematical law which says you should always perform division and multiplication before addition and subtraction.

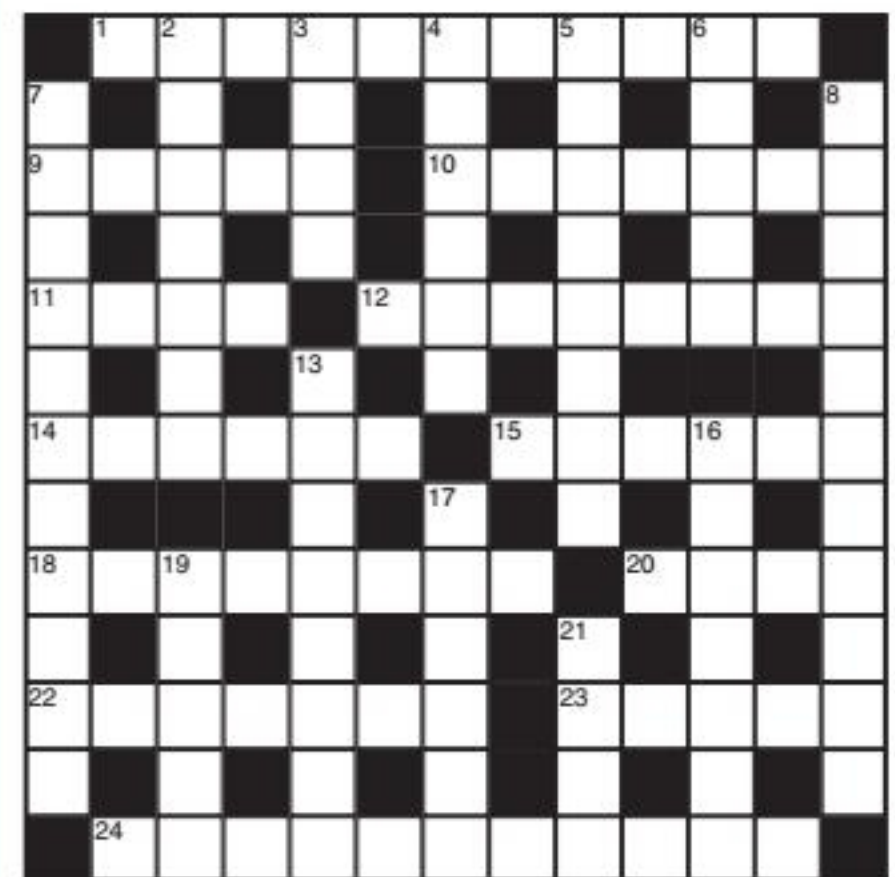
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SOLUTIONS

[illegible]

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



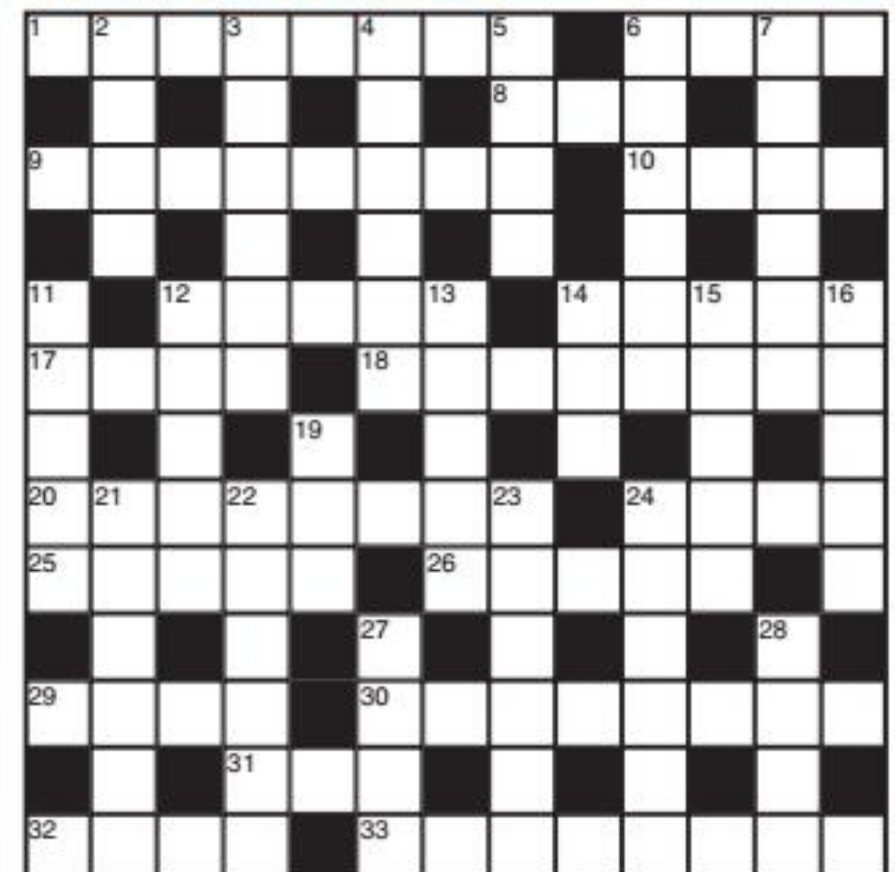
ACROSS

1. Wrong way to create wealth after an interval (5,3,3)
9. Happen to find commander with a dog (5)
10. Various recipes to be exact (7)
11. Old computer technology on the way out (4)
12. First Polish worker is prejudiced (8)
14. Arranged to send the port (6)
15. Man on board – see where he works (6)
18. Departed with more than a remnant (4,4)
20. Take part in choral society as well (4)
22. Toil to strengthen one used to manual labour (7)
23. Entry on the left (5)
24. Anyway attended the whole athletics meeting (2,3,6)

DOWN

2. Written acknowledgment concerning the said seat (7)
3. It may be crooked but it ends outlawry (4)
4. Work in that formal wear (3,3)
5. Train that needs a conductor to work (8)
6. Oh dear, I have included an assumed name (5)
7. End up fighting – or suffer with a heavy cold? (4,2,5)
8. Our best pans cook vegetables (4,7)
13. In class a student relaxed (8)
16. Harry has one objection – fish (7)
17. A meeting conducted with spirit? (6)
19. Confer a short way before all the others (5)
21. Tool which does calculations, it is heard (4)

QUICK CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1. Pulling along (8)
6. Polish (4)
8. Beer (3)
9. Tailor (8)
10. Agricultural estate (4)
12. Foremost (5)
14. Slumber (5)
17. Group of nations (4)
18. Lay out in columns (8)
20. Not derived or copied (8)
24. Dam (4)

25. French river (5)
26. Redbreast (5)
29. Sea duck (4)
30. Object of
abhorrence (8)
31. Stray (3)
32. Type (4)
33. Cheapest
accommodation (8)
- DOWN**
2. Actor's part (4)
3. Architectural
style (6)
4. Frostiest (6)
5. Clothes (4)
6. Occur (6)

DOWN

2. Actor's part (4)
3. Architectural style (6)
4. Frostiest (6)
5. Clothes (4)
6. Occur (6)
21. Parallelograms (6)
22. Nibbled (6)
23. Venue (6)
24. Fade (6)
27. Planet (4)
28. Complacent (4)

18. Lay out
column

20. Not derived or copied (8)
24. Dam (4)

Friday March 23rd

TOP TV

MORNING

AFTERNOON

EVENING

BBC 1

5.15pm
Pointless

9.15am Holding Back the Years
10.00am Homes Under the Hammer
11.00am The Sheriffs are Coming
11.45am Caught Red Handed

BBC 2

7.00pm Saving
Lives at Sea

7.15am The Sheriffs are Coming
8.00am Back in Time for Tea
9.00am Victoria Derbyshire
11.00am BBC Newsroom Live

ITV

3.00pm
Dickinson's
Real Deal

8.30am Lorraine
9.25am The Jeremy Kyle Show
10.30am This Morning

Channel 4

1.05pm Posh
Pawnbrokers

7.10am 3rd Rock from the Sun
7.35am Everybody Loves Raymond
8.30am Frasier
10.05am Ramsay's Kitchen
Nightmares USA
11.00am Undercover Boss USA

Channel 5

1.45pm
Neighbours

8.20am Digby Dragon
8.35am Rusty Rivets
8.55am Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom
9.05am Mofy
9.15am The Wright Stuff
11.15am Can't Pay? We'll Take it Away!

12.15pm Bargain Hunt
1.00pm BBC News at One
1.30pm Regional News and Weather
1.45pm Doctors
2.15pm A Place to Call Home
3.00pm Escape to the Country
3.45pm Money for Nothing
4.30pm Flog It!
5.15pm Pointless

12.00pm The Daily Politics
1.00pm Two Tribes
1.30pm Yes Chef
2.15pm Monty Halls' Great Irish Escape
3.15pm Planet Earth
4.15pm Spy in the Wild
5.15pm Put Your Money Where
Your Mouth Is

12.30pm Loose Women
1.30pm ITV Lunchtime News
1.55pm ITV News London
2.00pm Judge Rinder
3.00pm Dickinson's Real Deal
4.00pm Tipping Point
5.00pm The Chase

12.00pm Channel 4 News
12.05pm Come Dine with Me
1.05pm Posh Pawnbrokers
2.10pm Countdown
3.00pm A Place in the Sun
4.00pm A New Life in the Sun
5.00pm Four in a Bed
5.30pm Star Boot Sale

12.10pm 5 News Lunchtime
12.15pm GPs: Behind Closed Doors
1.15pm Home and Away
1.45pm Neighbours
2.15pm NCIS
3.15pm The Gourmet Detective
3: Death Al Dente
5.00pm 5 News at 5
5.30pm Neighbours

6.00pm BBC News at Six
6.30pm Regional News and Weather
7.00pm Sport Relief 2018
10.00pm BBC News at Ten
10.25pm Regional News and Weather
10.35pm Sport Relief 2018
1.00am Zoe Ball's Hardest Road Home
2.00am Weather for the Week Ahead
2.05am BBC News
6.00am Breakfast

6.00pm Eggheads
6.30pm The Repair Shop
7.00pm Saving Lives at Sea
8.00pm David Attenborough's
Natural Curiosities
8.30pm Gardeners' World
9.00pm Pilgrimage: The Road
to Santiago
10.00pm A Question of Sport Relief
10.40pm Newsnight
11.15pm The Assassination of Gianni
Versace - American Crime Story
12.10am The Ones Below
1.30am Panorama

6.00pm ITV News London
6.30pm ITV Evening News
7.00pm Emmerdale
7.30pm International Football
10.00pm ITV News at Ten and Weather
10.30pm ITV News London
10.45pm International Football Highlights
11.50pm Play to the Whistle
12.40am Jackpot247
3.00am Take on the Twisters
3.50am ITV Nightscreen
6.00am Sooty
6.10am Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids
6.20am Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids

6.00pm The Simpsons
6.30pm Hollyoaks
7.00pm Channel 4 News
8.00pm Britain's Favourite Food
9.00pm Gogglebox
10.00pm The Last Leg
11.05pm Rude Tube
12.10am The Net
2.10am Damned
2.35am Electric Dreams
3.30am The Question Jury
4.25am George Clarke's
Amazing Spaces
5.20am Coast v Country

6.00pm Home and Away
6.30pm 5 News Tonight
7.00pm The Gadget Show
8.00pm Sandringham: Holidaying
with the Queen
9.00pm Jane McDonald and Friends
10.00pm Will and Grace
10.30pm Lip Sync Battle UK
11.05pm Greatest Ever Celebrity
Wind-Ups
12.00am Super Casino
3.10am Cowboy Builders
4.00am The X Files
4.45am House Doctor



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Saturday March 24th

TOP TV

MORNING

AFTERNOON

EVENING

BBC 1

3.50pm
The Boat Race10.00am Saturday Kitchen Live
11.30am Classic Mary Berry

BBC 2

6.00pm
Hugh's Wild West8.00am Absolute Genius: Monster Builds
8.30am Beyond Bionic
9.00am Robot Wars
10.00am Gordon Buchanan: Elephant Family and Me
11.00am Famously Unfit for Sports Relief

ITV

7.00pm Ant
and Dec's Saturday
Night Takeaway9.05am Wishfart
9.25am ITV News
9.30am Saturday Morning with James Martin
11.20am Who's Doing the Dishes?

Channel 4

8.00pm Britain
at Low Tide7.05am King of Queens
7.30am Mobil 1 the Grid
8.00am Everybody Loves Raymond
8.55am Frasier
10.30am The Big Bang Theory

Channel 5

12.30pm Police
Interceptors9.25am Digby Dragon
9.40am Peppa Pig
9.50am Peppa Pig
10.00am Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
10.35am The Gadget Show
11.30am Police Interceptors12.00pm Football Focus
12.30pm BBC News
12.45pm The Pirates! In an Adventure with Scientists!
2.05pm Gymnastics
3.50pm The Boat Race12.00pm Homes Under the Hammer
12.45pm Escape to the Country
1.30pm Planet Earth
2.30pm Me and My Dog
3.30pm The Repair Shop
4.00pm The Secret Helpers
5.00pm Big Cats12.20pm ITV Lunchtime News
12.30pm Dancing on Ice - The Final
1.30pm Britain's Brightest Family
2.30pm Celebrity Catchphrase
4.00pm Tipping Point
5.00pm The Chase
6.00pm ITV Evening News
6.20pm ITV News London
6.30pm You've Been Framed!
7.00pm Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway12.00pm The Simpsons
12.30pm The Simpsons
1.00pm Formula 1
2.50pm Car S.O.S.
3.50pm Coast v Country
4.50pm A Place in the Sun
5.35pm The Secret Life of the Zoo12.30pm Police Interceptors
1.30pm Police Interceptors
2.30pm Live Premiership Rugby
5.15pm Can't Pay? We'll Take it Away!6.15pm Doodlebugs
6.30pm BBC News
6.40pm Regional News and Weather
6.45pm Pointless
7.40pm Who Dares Wins
8.20pm Casualty
9.10pm Troy: Fall of a City
10.10pm BBC News
10.30pm Guardians of the Galaxy
12.25am Weather for the Week Ahead
12.30am BBC News
5.00am Breakfast6.00pm Hugh's Wild West
7.00pm Amazing Hotels: Life Beyond the Lobby
8.00pm David Attenborough's Natural Curiosities
8.30pm Dad's Army
9.00pm Picasso's Last Stand
10.00pm A Late Quartet
11.40pm Safe Haven
1.30am Civilisations
2.30am This is BBC Two
5.20am Coast
6.20am The Instant Gardener8.30pm The Voice UK
10.30pm ITV News
10.45pm Fast Five
1.00am Jackpot247
3.00am Babushka
3.50am ITV Nightscreen
5.00am Sooty
5.10am Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids
5.20am Grizzly Tales for Gruesome Kids
5.35am Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures
5.50am Super 4
6.00am Share a Story
6.05am Marvel's Avengers: Ultron Revolution6.30pm Channel 4 News
7.00pm Coastal Railways with Julie Walters
8.00pm Britain at Low Tide
9.00pm Everest
11.20pm Predator 2
1.20am Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA
Hollyoaks Omnibus
2.10am Coast v Country
4.15am King of Queens
5.10am King of Queens
5.35am Everybody Loves Raymond
6.00am Everybody Loves Raymond
6.25am Frasier6.10pm Can't Pay? We'll Take it Away!
7.00pm Cruising with Jane McDonald
7.55pm 5 News Weekend
8.00pm Inside Windsor Castle
9.00pm King Tut's Treasure Secrets
9.55pm King Tut's Tomb: The Hidden Chamber
10.50pm Secrets of the Valley of the Kings
11.40pm Football on 5
12.15am Super Casino
2.10am Due Date
3.45am House Doctor
4.10am The Great Artists
4.35am Wildlife SOS

Holidays for Dogs

Dogs are more than just cuddly companions; they can bring real health benefits to their owners, not least encouraging regular exercise. Having a dog around can lead to lower stress levels for both adults and children and research has shown that having a dog can be linked to lower blood pressure. But what about when you, as a dog owner, want to go away on holiday? For your own peace of mind, it's important to know just who will be caring for your dog while you're away.

Home boarding is popular alternative to kennels and provides your dog with the benefit of staying with a carer as a member of their family, receiving the love, attention and exercise that they would get at home.

Selecting the right home boarding company is extremely important and six questions you should ask before you let a stranger take care of your dog are:

1. Is the boarder licenced? Anyone boarding dogs in their home is required by law to obtain an Animal Boarding Licence from their local council. Unfortunately there are many unlicensed home boarders. Of course, the lack of a licence doesn't mean your dog will not be taken very good care of, but it does mean the carer is breaking the law. The licence is your guarantee that they have been inspected by the council in accordance with their animal welfare standards.
2. Are they insured? Any reputable boarder should have full Public Liability and Care, Custody and Control Insurance. Most will have this, as it is as much in their own interest as yours, but always check. And bear in mind that, even if they do have insurance, it may be invalid if they are unlicensed.
3. How many other dogs will be boarded at the same time? The council will usually set a limit as part of the licence conditions but some boarders will only take dogs from one family at any one time so, if your dog is nervous of other dogs, or you would like them to have 1:1 attention, this may be more suitable for you.

4. Can you take your dog to meet the boarder before the holiday? You will naturally want to meet the person who is looking after your dog, and see where he is going to stay. Any reputable boarder will encourage this as they will also want to meet your dog as well, but there are some companies which does not allow it.

5. What backup does the boarder have in the event of an emergency? If you are using one of the various national boarding companies, do they have a local co-ordinator providing 24/7 support for their boarders? The online companies, simply because they operate online only, are unable to provide such a personal level of support.

6. What experience does the boarder have? Ask them about their own experience of dog ownership, or whether they have other experience of working with dogs, perhaps with a kennels or rescue organisation, or in dog training. If your dog is a breed that has special needs, do they have experience of that breed? Question the motives and ability of someone who has no previous experience with dogs.

Once you have found an experienced boarder you can go away safe in the knowledge that your dog will be having a good holiday as you.

Written by Wagging Tails

Matching dogs to the most suitable carer is paramount to Wagging Tails, to ensure that the dogs are content and their owners can then relax whilst they are away;

Due to the popularity of this service Wagging Tails are always interested to hear from dog lovers wishing to join their team of carers throughout Oxfordshire. If you think you could welcome a dog into your family or would like further information about the service, please visit:

www.waggingtailsuk.co.uk

or call Teresa Bowers on

07762 132329

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For more information on our home boarding service contact:

Wagging Tails
Where happy dogs holiday

Teresa Bowers

Phone: 07762 132329

Email: ox@waggingtailsuk.co.uk

www.waggingtailsuk.co.uk/ox

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Sunday March 25th

TOP TV

MORNING

AFTERNOON

EVENING

BBC 1

9.30pm War of the Worlds



8.00am The Andrew Marr Show
9.00am The Big Questions
10.00am Sunday Politics
11.15am BBC News
11.30am MasterChef

12.30pm MasterChef
1.30pm MasterChef
2.00pm Money for Nothing
3.00pm Escape to the Country
3.30pm Songs of Praise
4.05pm Sport Relief 2018
5.05pm BBC News
5.20pm Regional News and Weather
5.30pm Countryfile

6.30pm Hold the Sunset
7.00pm MasterChef
7.30pm RAF at 100 with Ewan and Colin McGregor
9.00pm BBC News
9.20pm Regional News and Weather
9.30pm War of the Worlds
11.15pm The Women's Football Show
11.50pm Weather for the Week Ahead
11.55pm BBC News
5.00am Breakfast

BBC 2

4.00pm Real Steel



8.35am Saturday Kitchen Best Bites
10.05am Spring Kitchen with Tom Kerridge
10.50am Lorraine Pascale: How to be a Better Cook
11.20am Homes Under the Hammer

12.20pm Bringing Up Baby
2.00pm Pilgrimage: The Road to Santiago
3.00pm The Ladykillers: Pest Detectives
4.00pm Real Steel

6.00pm Down the Mighty River with Steve Backshall
7.00pm Top Gear
8.00pm Reggie Yates: Searching for Grenfell's Lost Lives
9.00pm Mock the Week
9.30pm Top Gear: Extra Gear
9.55pm Life of Crime
11.30pm Question Time
12.30am Holby City
1.30am This is BBC Two
5.00am The Repair Shop
5.30am Holding Back the Years
6.15am The Sheriffs are Coming

ITV

10.20pm Captain Corelli's Mandolin



8.25am ITV News
8.30am Best Walks with a View with Julia Bradbury
9.00am Peston on Sunday
10.00am The Voice UK
11.50am ITV Lunchtime News

12.00pm Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway
1.30pm You've Been Framed!
2.00pm Tenable
3.00pm Tipping Point
4.00pm The Chase: Celebrity Special
5.00pm Paul O'grady: For the Love of Dogs
5.30pm ITV Evening News
5.45pm ITV News London

6.00pm Celebrity Catchphrase
7.00pm The Durrells
8.00pm The Good Karma Hospital
9.00pm ITV News
9.20pm Peston on Sunday
10.20pm Captain Corelli's Mandolin
12.25am Jackpot247
2.00am Marcella
2.50am ITV Nightscreen
4.05am The Jeremy Kyle Show
5.00am Good Morning Britain

Channel 4

1.30pm Formula 1



7.25am Race of Champions 2018
8.30am Sunday Brunch
11.30am Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast

12.30pm The Simpsons
1.00pm The Simpsons
1.30pm Formula 1
4.15pm The Great Celebrity Bake Off for Stand Up to Cancer
5.30pm Channel 4 News

6.00pm Homes by the Med
7.00pm Escape to the Chateau
8.00pm Homeland
9.15pm 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown
10.10pm Rush
12.25am The Last Leg
1.20am The Question Jury
2.15am KOTV Boxing Weekly
2.45am Mobil 1 the Grid
3.10am Mobil 1 the Grid
3.40am Coast v Country
4.35am Streetmate
5.00am Countdown

Channel 5

8.00pm The Bodyguard



8.50am Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles
9.25am Football on 5
9.50am Cats Make You Laugh Out Loud 4
10.20am Police Interceptors
11.20am The Illusionist

1.25pm The Man in the Iron Mask
3.45pm A Knight's Tale
4.45pm 5 News
4.50pm A Knight's Tale

6.05pm Can't Pay? We'll Take it Away!
7.00pm Can't Pay? We'll Take it Away!
7.55pm 5 News Weekend
8.00pm The Bodyguard
9.00pm 5 News
9.05pm The Bodyguard
10.35pm Whitney Houston: A Tragic Love
12.20am Whitney Houston: Her Greatest Hits
1.10am Super Casino
2.10am Greatest Ever Celebrity Wind-Ups
3.00am Britain's Greatest Bridges
3.45am House Doctor

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Monday March 26th

TOP TV

MORNING

AFTERNOON

EVENING

BBC 1

3.30pm Flog It!



8.15am Holding Back the Years
9.00am Homes Under the Hammer
10.00am The Sheriffs are Coming
10.45am Claimed and Shamed
11.15am Bargain Hunt

12.00pm BBC News at One
12.30pm Regional News and Weather
12.45pm Doctors
1.15pm A Place to Call Home
2.05pm Escape to the Country
2.45pm Money for Nothing
3.30pm Flog It!
4.15pm Pointless
5.00pm BBC News at Six
5.30pm Regional News and Weather
6.00pm The One Show

6.30pm MasterChef
7.00pm EastEnders
7.30pm Classic Mary Berry
8.00pm The Queen
9.00pm BBC News at Ten
9.30pm Regional News and Weather
9.45pm Ingrid Bergman in Her Own Words
11.25pm Live at the Apollo
12.15am Weather for the Week Ahead
12.20am BBC News
5.00am Breakfast

BBC 2

7.00pm Only Connect



7.00am Hugh's Wild West
8.00am Victoria Derbyshire
10.00am BBC Newsroom Live
10.30am The Week in Parliament
11.00am The Daily Politics

12.00pm Coast
12.10pm Mr. Blandings Builds His Dream House
1.40pm Monty Halls' Great Irish Escape
2.40pm Blitz Cities
3.10pm Britain's Ultimate Pilots: Inside the RAF
4.15pm Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is
5.00pm Eggheads
5.30pm The Repair Shop

6.00pm Top Gear
7.00pm Only Connect
7.30pm University Challenge
8.00pm Hospital
9.00pm QI
9.30pm Newsnight
10.15pm Pilgrimage: The Road to Santiago
11.15pm Countryfile
12.10am Being Blacker
1.40am This is BBC Two
5.00am The Repair Shop
5.30am Money for Nothing
6.15am Bargain Hunt

ITV

8.00pm Marcella



7.30am Lorraine
8.25am The Jeremy Kyle Show
9.30am This Morning
11.30am Loose Women

12.30pm ITV Lunchtime News
12.55pm ITV News London
1.00pm Judge Rinder
2.00pm Dickinson's Real Deal
3.00pm Tipping Point
4.00pm The Chase
5.00pm ITV News London
5.30pm ITV Evening News

6.00pm Emmerdale
6.30pm Coronation Street
7.00pm The Kyle Files
7.30pm Coronation Street
8.00pm Marcella
9.00pm ITV News at Ten and Weather
9.35pm ITV News London
9.50pm 100 Years Younger in 21 Days
10.50pm 100 Year Old Driving School
11.15pm Martin Luther King by Trevor McDonald
12.05am The Kyle Files
12.30am Jackpot247
2.00am The Jeremy Kyle Show

Channel 4

11.05am Come Dine with Me



7.30am Frasier
9.05am Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA
10.00am Undercover Boss USA
11.00am Channel 4 News
11.05am Come Dine with Me

12.05pm Posh Pawnbrokers
1.10pm Countdown
2.00pm A Place in the Sun
3.00pm A New Life in the Sun
4.00pm Four in a Bed
4.30pm Star Boot Sale
5.00pm The Simpsons
5.30pm Hollyoaks

6.00pm Channel 4 News
7.00pm Dispatches
7.30pm Thrifty Ways to... Summer Holiday
8.00pm 24 Hours in Police Custody
9.00pm Russian Spy Assassins: The Salisbury Attack
10.05pm How to Get a Council House
11.05pm The Job Interview
12.00pm The Supertv
12.55am My Baby's Life: Who Decides?
1.50am The Question Jury
2.45am George Clarke's Amazing Spaces

Channel 5

10.05pm The X Files



7.55am Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom
8.05am Mofy
8.15am The Wright Stuff
10.15am Can't Pay? We'll Take it Away!
11.10am 5 News Lunchtime
11.15am The Gadget Show

12.15pm Home and Away
12.45pm Neighbours
1.15pm NCIS
2.15pm Kidnapped: Desperate Hours
4.00pm 5 News at 5
4.30pm Neighbours
5.00pm Home and Away
5.30pm 5 News Tonight

6.00pm Aviva Premiership Rugby Highlights
7.00pm Extreme Winter Road Rescue
8.00pm Paddington Station 24/7
9.00pm Armed and Deadly: Police UK
10.05pm The X Files
11.05pm The X Files
11.55pm Super Casino
2.10am Bargain Loving Brits in the Sun
3.00am Britain's Greatest Bridges
3.45am House Doctor
4.10am The Great Artists
4.35am Wildlife SOS
5.00am Puffin Rock

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14 April - Fish & Chip Quiz Night*, brain teasing fun & bar onboard
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12 May - Murder Mystery Night*, Fish & Chip Supper, new lower price
20 May - Senior Specials, 60+ yrs travel for just £5
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Thursday, March 22 - Wednesday, March 28

Make this Easter a weekend to remember

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Every child will receive an Easter Egg.

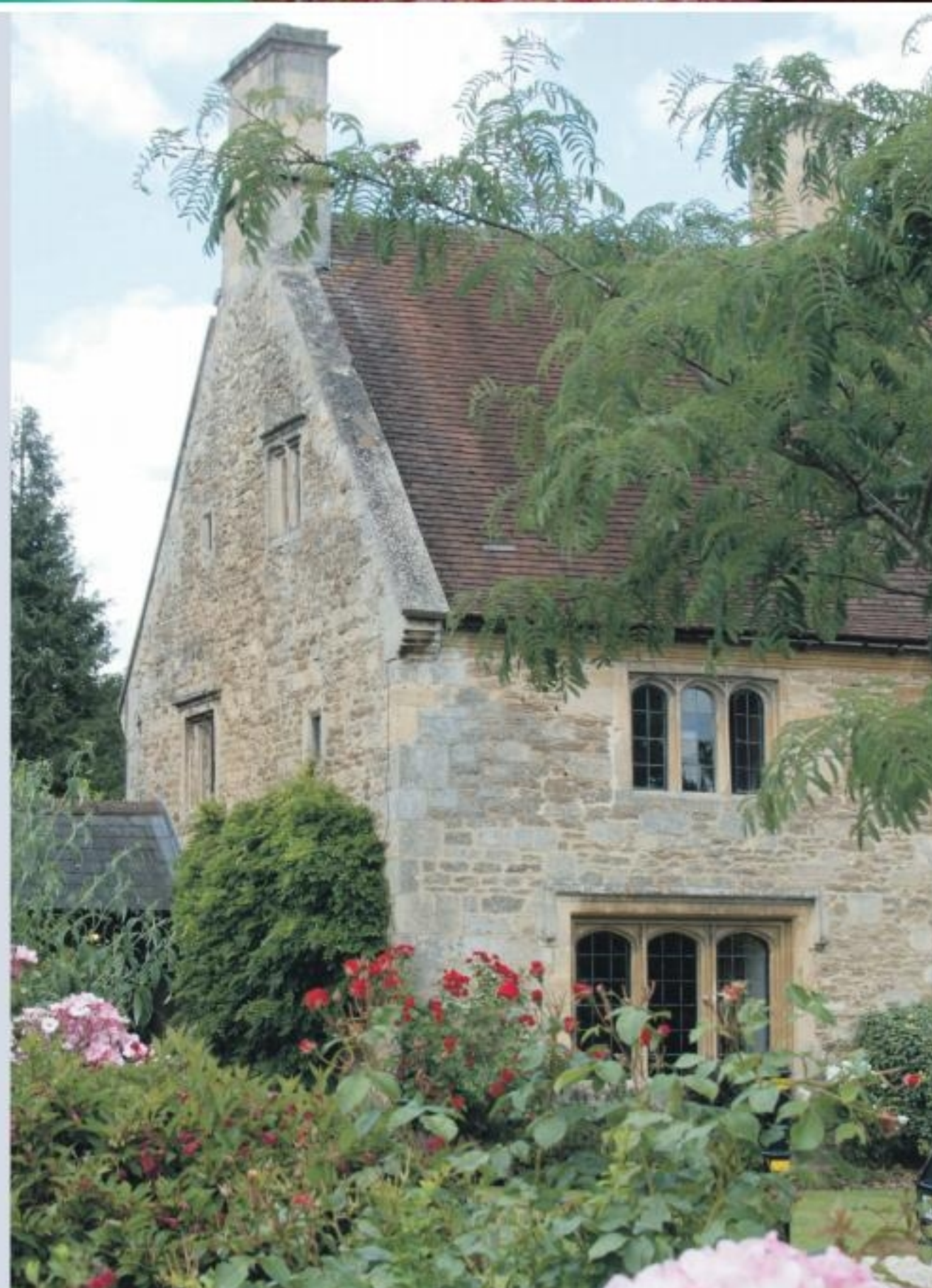
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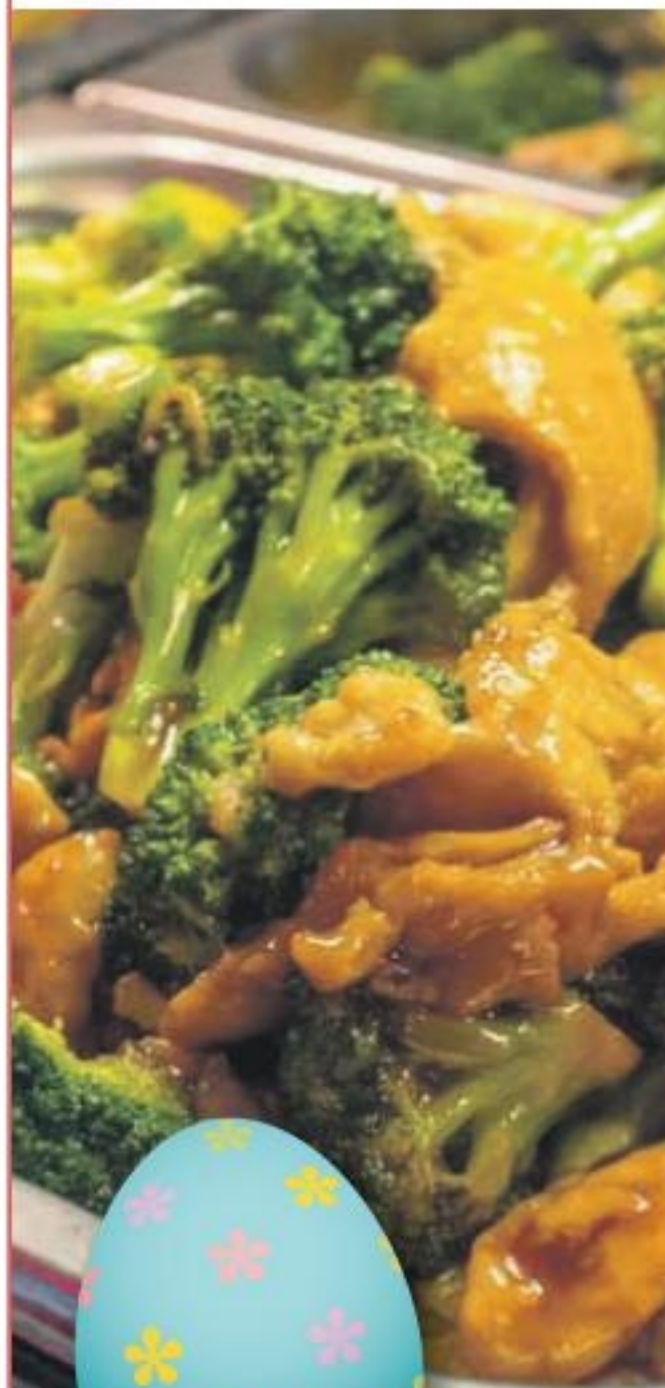
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Spare Ribs in Barbecue Sauce
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Lemon Chicken
Deep Fried Chicken Wing
Vegetable Curry Samosa
Chips

MAIN COURSES

Continue your lunchtime voyage to Asia and get your taste buds tingling with some of our round the world dishes. Guaranteed to satisfy your hunger.

Pork Chops with Sweet Chilli Sauce
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Beef with Black Bean Sauce
Malaysian Chicken Curry
Vegetable Foo Yung
Stir Fried Egg Plants & Green Beans
Mushroom with Oyster Sauce
Mix Vegetable & Bean Curd with Yellow Bean Sauce
Deep Fried Aubergines
Fried Rice
Boil Rice
Chips
Noodles in Special Soy Sauce
Singapore Vermicelli

DESSERTS

Top off your lunch with something sweet. Don't worry, it's all for one affordable price!

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Headline Act



Mandy Knight was trained at "Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Art". As a stand up she has headlined all over the world as well as appearing on numerous television and radio entertainment shows including: "Live at Jongleurs" and "The Comedy Store" and "The Little Big Woman Radio Show". Mandy is a true dame of British stand-up comedy and was the first female comedian to compete that bastion of old-school stand-up The Comedy Store.

"Inspired comedy" *Time Out*

"A virtuoso comedienne" *The Independent*

"A stream of priceless gems" *The Guardian*

Comperes



Brian Damage & Krysstal
Brian won the JONGLEURS New Act Competition in April '98 and has never looked back - that is until he met Krysstal, now he is looking constantly over his shoulder, wondering what on earth she is up to.

"... as deft and charming as they are funny..." *The Stage*
"Always enjoyable... incredibly funny... His 'Buddy Holly plays Oasis' is a gem" - *Chortle*



Andy Storey is one of the most exciting, original and idiosyncratic rising stars of the post alternative comedy scene. His deliciously dry sense of humour, and effortless performance style mark him out as a refreshing, albeit positively cynical new voice in comedy.

BBC Comedy Awards 2015 Final.
"Slick relaxed delivery... Wry punchlines efficiently packed in keeping the audience laughing." *Chortle*.

"A bellyful of laughs..." *Bedfordshire News*

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Asking prices hit record highs

Bill Cooper, co-author of *The Oxford Property Blog* and managing director of Martin and Co, Oxford



The Bank of England has warned that the housing boom means that borrowers are stretching themselves like never before to buy property, with over 27% borrowing more than four times their annual income. To put that into perspective, it is the highest figure ever and double the ratio of eight years ago.

This appears to be borne-out by Rightmove data which reports that first-time and second-time properties in the UK have hit all-time highs of £189,840 and £272,031 respectively. Rightmove goes on to report that

the average asking price for newly-marketed properties has jumped 1.5%, at the same time as a 5% drop in the number of properties coming to market compared to a year ago.

In Oxford 1 bed properties currently on the market range from £350,000 to £450,000 for an apartment in central Oxford or Summertown down to £160,000 to £200,000 in East Oxford. The lowest priced Oxford 1-bedroom apartment currently on sale is valued at £6,154 per square metre. There is a studio apartment measuring less than 13 square metres with an asking price

of £180,000, that's £14,000 per square metre. To put that into perspective, the highest priced 4 bed properties are valued at around £10,500 per square metre; and the lowest priced 4 beds are valued at around £2,600 per square metre. On this basis (value per square metre) first time buyers in Oxford must pay between £6,154 and £14,000 per square metre, when families pay between £2,600 and £10,500 per square metre.

In line with the national trend, Oxford is also experiencing a fall in the number of transactions (completed

sales) down 14% on the previous 12-month period. Of the 2,845 sales completed, just 2% were new build, up on the 1% previously. However, of the total new build 59.8% were detached properties and just 18.6% apartments and 7.2% terraced properties. So, new build is not only below the required level, but the Council (via its planning approvals) and house builders are prioritising detached 4 and 5 bed properties over first and second time buyer properties.

This appears to be a peculiarly 'Oxford' problem. Across the South East as a whole apartments and terraced properties account for over half (51%) roughly double that achieved in Oxford.

Is the Bank of England right to be warning about the level of debt as a multiple of income for house purchase? Well, it is worried particularly about the sustainability of that debt as interest rates rise. For many first and second time buyers, BoE interest rates

have not exceeded 0.5%, meaning mortgage debt has been cheap. We are now entering a period where interest rates will progressively normalise towards their long-term trend rate of nearer 5% - a tenfold increase on what many have ever experienced. This is a valid concern where those home owners do not move quickly to fix their interest rate, insulating themselves from the expected rise in base rates.

First-time buyers in Oxford currently have no choice - they are expected to pay the most for the space they acquire, in one of the Country's most expensive real estate markets. Until local planners and house builders work together to increase the supply of 1 and 2 bedroom properties, this will not change, and the Oxford market will remain stubbornly unaffordable.

For more comment on Oxford's housing market visit www.OxfordPropertyBlog.co.uk



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WANTAGE In superb condition throughout, this four bedroom family home provides well proportioned accommodation combined with an integral garage and driveway parking. EPC Rating D.

£480,000 Wantage office 01235 772670



WATLINGTON This 3 bedroom home is set on a corner plot with a South-East facing garden to the rear; there are striking views beyond the garden across fields and open countryside. EPC Rating E

£400,000 Wallingford office 01491 833323



ABINGDON-ON-THAMES An individual bungalow on this popular private no through road in North Abingdon. The property has plenty of scope to develop (subject to planning). EPC Rating D

£369,995 Abingdon office 01235 526907



WANTAGE A well proportioned and presented, individually architect designed detached home. Including oak doors throughout, zoned under floor heating downstairs and open plan kitchen/diner with bi-fold doors. EPC Rating B

£355,000 Wantage office 01235 772670



WINTERBROOK Set in a cul-de-sac just 0.5 miles from Wallingford town square this 2 bed property is deceptively spacious and has the added benefit of communal grounds of approx 1.2 acres leading to the River Thames. EPC Rating D.

£325,000 Wallingford office 01491 833323



ABINGDON A superb, extended, three bedroom family home with garage and driveway parking. Well presented throughout, side access to the rear garden which offers a good degree of privacy. EPC Rating D

£300,000 Abingdon office 01235 526907



ABINGDON A two bedroom apartment nestled in the heart of this historic market town. The property is an ideal first time purchase or investment opportunity with an approx. 4.5% return per annum. No onward chain. Awaiting EPC Rating

£270,000 Abingdon office 01235 526907



DIDCOT An immaculately presented 2 bedroom house in a small enclave of 3 properties. It is situated on the popular Ladygrove development and would make an ideal purchase for first time buyers and investors. EPC Rating C

£270,000 Didcot office 01235 818371



ABINGDON A four bedroom detached family house situated towards the north end of Oxford Road. The house includes a modern kitchen, open plan to the dining room. Unfurnished. Available end of March. Council tax band G. EPC Rating E.

£2,250 p.c.m + fees Abingdon office 01235 526907



ABINGDON-ON-THAMES This ground floor 2 bed apartment has its own entrance and offers an open-plan living room/diner with triple aspect views over the Marina Basin. Available March. Unfurnished. EPC Rating C.

£1,500 p.c.m + fees Abingdon office 01235 526907



ABINGDON-ON-THAMES A top floor 2 bed apartment with a South-East facing balcony, in this ever popular development close to Abingdon Town Centre. Unfurnished. EPC Rating D.

£825 p.c.m + fees Abingdon office 01235 526907



DIDCOT A smartly presented, one bedroom ground floor property located on the Great Western Park development. The property benefits from GCH, and has one allocated parking space. Unfurnished, available now. EPC Rating B.

£800 p.c.m + fees Didcot office 01235 818371



SOUTH MORETON Approached up a long, private drive, Moatside was built next to an ancient moat which is believed to have surrounded the C13th manor house. The property is now a spacious L-shaped, split-level family house, set in attractive gardens and paddocks. EPC Rating C.
£1,195,000 Wallingford office 01491 833323



GROVE A well presented detached family home situated in a pleasant cul-de-sac location in the popular village location of Grove. Kitchen, Four bedrooms, with the added benefit of an en-suite bathroom to master. There is an integral garage. Awaiting EPC Rating.
£369,950 Wantage office 01235 772670



CHILTON A beautifully presented 3 bed family home overlooking a pleasant green with a stunning kitchen/dining room, ground floor cloakroom, en-suite master bedroom, detached garage and ample parking. EPC Rating B.
£329,950 Didcot office 01235 818371



WANTAGE Forming part of a stylish conversion of an attractive period building, is one of four apartments within this conversion of the Old Engineering Works. This ground floor apartment offers well planned, spacious accommodation. Allocated and visitor parking. Awaiting EPC Rating.
£145,000 Wantage office 01235 772670

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Kia Stonic 1.0 T-GDi '2'

Everything you need and good looks

By **Tony Yates**

EXCITING; sporty, smart; confident – four words which Kia believe perfectly capture the spirit and character of the new Kia Stonic – and to be honest, I totally agree.

For those that don't know, there is a five-model line-up based on grade '2' and 'First Edition' trim levels. All versions offer an extensive package of connectivity features, including links to Android Auto and Apple CarPlay via pre-downloaded smartphone apps, while advanced electronic driver assistance systems such as autonomous emergency braking, lane departure warning and automatic switching between high and low headlight beams are available. So, as usual, Kia has not been shy in giving the modern driver everything they will ever need. Also, for the record, I reckon it's pretty handsome too.

Power & efficiency

The Stonic I had on test was fitted with a 998cc 3 cylinder petrol engine

that develops 118bhp and 171 lb ft of torque which I have to say feels lively and is more than happy to be revved hard on the motorway or rumble around on the urban towns where it really does come into its own to help you save fuel and make motoring around our busy streets just that little bit easier. The Stonic also achieved 50.3mpg on the combined cycle which is quite impressive. Maximum speed also comes in at around 115mph, followed by a 0-62 time of 9.9s.

On the road

I was expecting the suspension to feel a little hard – but to my surprise, it felt really nice and sporty into the corners and not really that hard at all. The steering also felt very light and well weighted which was a nice surprise. Road noise at high speed was also very minimal – even with those big 17" alloy wheels. But, for me, the best bit was how the suspension managed to mask even the most formidable of road surfaces. The brakes also felt good and firm too.



Design & technology

On the inside, the interior is very good, and all the dials are easy to read. Plus all the vehicle controls are in the right place and well set out. As I said earlier, you get some pretty decent equipment, which includes; 17" alloy wheels,

black high gloss & satin radiator grille, tinted glass, rear spoiler with high-mounted brake light, rear combination lights, black cloth upholstery with grey stitching, manual seat height adjuster, silver finish interior door handles, day & night rear-view mirror, cruise control & speed limiter, air conditioning, leather

trimmed steering wheel and gearshift knob, 6-speaker system, steering wheel mounted controls, USB & AUX ports for connection of a media device, trip computer, 3.5" supervision monochrome cluster display, rear parking sensors, Bluetooth® with music streaming, Apple CarPlay™ & Android Auto™ with voice control, 7" Display with DAB/RDS radio and MP3 compatibility.

Plus; ABS with Electronic Brakeforce Distribution (EBD) & Brake Assist System (BAS), Electronic Stability Control (ESC) & Vehicle Stability Management (VSM), Hill-start Assist Control (HAC), Emergency Stop Signaling (ESS), twin front airbags, twin side airbags (front), twin curtain airbags, ISOFIX child seat top tethers & anchor fixings.

To sum up

I'm going to give the Kia Stonic four stars in this test, not only because I like how it looks on the outside, but also because Kia gives you everything you will ever need at a reasonable price.

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Model Shown: CR-V 2.0 i-VTEC EX Manual in Polished Metal at £32,815 On The Road (OTR). Terms and Conditions: New retail CR-V 2.0 i-VTEC EX ordered from 01 February 2018 to 31 March 2018 and registered by 31 March 2018. Subject to model and colour availability. Oers applicable at participating dealers and are at the promoter's absolute discretion. Not to be used along with any other oers currently available. 0% APR representative Honda Aspirations (PCP): Maximum customer deposit 30%. You do not have to pay the Final Payment if you return the car at the end of the agreement and you have paid all other amounts due, the vehicle is in good condition and has been serviced in accordance with the Honda service book and the maximum annual mileage has not been exceeded. Excess mileage charge includes VAT at current rate. Indemnities may be required in certain circumstances. Finance is only available to persons aged 18 or over, subject to status. All figures are correct at time of publication but may be subject to change. Johnsons Cars Limited are credit brokers, not lenders. Credit provided by Honda Finance Europe Plc. Cain Road, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 1HL. Honda Financial Services is a trading name of Honda Finance Europe Plc. Cain Road, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 1HL a company registered at Companies House No 03289418. Honda Finance Europe plc is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, Financial Services Register number 312541. 5 Years £599 Servicing: Please visit <http://www.honda.co.uk/cars/oers.html>. Johnsons Cars Ltd (Firm Reference Number: 512460) are an Appointed Representative of ITC Compliance Ltd, and are authorised & regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (their registration number is 313486) and are permitted to advise on and arrange General Insurance contracts. Registered Name: Johnsons Cars Ltd, Registered Office: Johnsons Cars Ltd, Empire Court, Albert Street, Redditch, Worcestershire B97 4DA. Registration No. 3716766.

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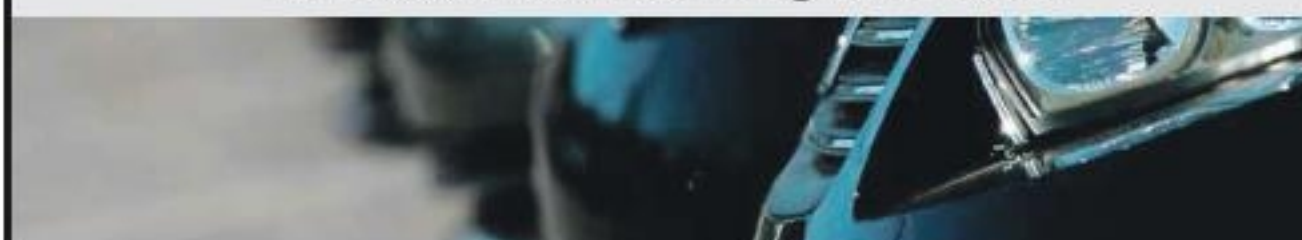
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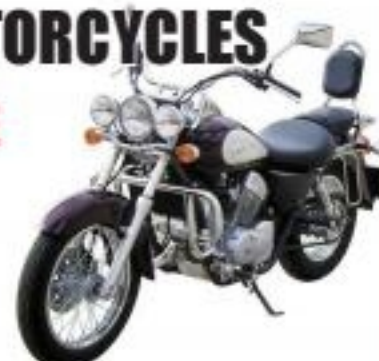
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Ready for lights to go out in Oz

By George Welch

F1 - Williams

SERGEY Sirotkin cannot wait to make his Formula 1 debut for Williams when he takes to the track in the season opener in Melbourne on Sunday.

The Russian signed for the Grove-based team during the winter, replacing Felipe Massa, who retired from the sport – for a second time – at the end of last season.

Sirotkin is the only change to the driver line-ups for the three Oxfordshire teams, with Renault and Haas sticking with Carlos Sainz and Nico Hulkenberg, and Kevin Magnussen and Romain Grosjean respectively.

The 22-year-old, who has raced in Formula 2 and 3, spent last year as Renault's third and reserve driver and will hop in the FW41 for his first Formula 1 race practice session tomorrow (Friday).

He said: "It's very exciting and I'm really looking forward to getting there, to start work and to get closer to the lights going out."

"I have always been a racing guy and I've always liked the competition, pushing the limits of myself as well as the limits of others."

"To win in this environment is the biggest dream you can imagine, so

Sergey Sirotkin is relishing the chance to put more pressure on himself in Melbourne
Pictures: Williams Martini F1 Racing



I'm really looking forward to this challenge, to put more pressure on myself and to deliver. It's going to be interesting."

Technical chief Paddy Lowe said he is anticipating a lot of tension around the first qualifying session, describing it as "the most interesting hour of the F1 season".

Indeed, all eyes will be on Williams

who struggled the most during the recent two-week tester in Barcelona.

Meanwhile, Renault are in positive mood after getting closer than any other team to the top three of Mercedes, Ferrari and Red Bull during their time in Spain.

The Enstone-based team, heading into their third year, believe they have improved stability and consistency

ahead of a very long 21-circuit season.

And after a positive test, drivers Hulkenberg and Sainz are confident.

"I feel positive", Hulkenberg said. "We've certainly made progress, not just over the whole of 2017 but also over the winter."

"I'm ready for the challenge and excited to get down to it and give it my all."

Drivers declare car to be 'best we've had so far'

F1 - Haas

A BULLISH Romain Grosjean believes this year's Haas is their best Formula 1 car to date.

The Frenchman and team-mate Kevin Magnussen enjoyed a solid pre-season as the VF-18 delivered on both pace and reliability.

Confident that last season's reliability issues have been ironed out, Grosjean said: "The VF-18 has a very good baseline."

"The feeling I get in the car is very good, which is the main thing. It's a good-looking car."

"We know where we can update it and try to get more performance from it. We're going to work on that."

"I think it has a good consistency and a very good platform that all of us, as drivers, want."

"I think it's the best car we've ever had so far for Haas F1 Team."

Magnussen also praised the 2018 challenger as 'consistent', while team principal Guenther Steiner hailed the aero, balance and design of the VF-18.

Haas have finished eighth in both their freshman and sophomore years and the Banbury-based side want to improve on this for their third year.

Steiner added: "I would say we'll know the potential of the car after qualifying in Australia."

"After the test, we can say we're in the midfield, and hopefully in the top half of the midfield. I think we are cautiously optimistic."



Romain Grosjean and Kevin Magnussen are ready for the new season
Picture: Haas F1

Drive of the day for Jaguar racer as he misses out on podium



Mitch Evans leapt 12 places to finish fourth in Uruguay
Picture: Panasonic Jaguar Racing

Formula E

JAGUAR driver Mitch Evans drove the race of the day to recover from a frustrating qualifying and just miss out on the podium at the Uruguay E-Prix on Saturday.

The Kiwi fought back valiantly to jump 12 positions from P16 to P4 as the Grove-based side impressed on a frustrating day in Punta del Este.

A rollercoaster qualifying session saw Evans show impressive pace, but was knocked back from P3 to P16 following a technical infringement.

But the 23-year-old ended up crossing the line less than two seconds behind third place.

He said: "It's a little bit frustrating as we could have pushed the guys at

the front if we started up there but it gives us confidence for the rest of the season."

"It was a sprint race and I enjoyed racing hard. Unfortunately not a podium but we're looking forward to Rome and we'll give it our best."

In addition to Evans' qualifying troubles, team-mate Nelson Piquet Jr, who crashed out of qualifying, was involved in an early-race collision and forced to retire.

But team director James Barclay praised Evans' fight back as 'phenomenal', adding: "[It] shows that as a team we are capable of more for the rest of the season."

Grove-based DS Virgin Racing driver Alex Lynn finished sixth.

The next E-Prix will be in Rome for the first time on April 14.

Tyre issues force Smith down track

MotoGP

OXFORD'S Bradley Smith improved on a tough MotoGP opener in Qatar on the Losail International Circuit but still placed outside of a points-scoring position.

Red Bull KTM rider Smith rallied to the points-scoring positions early on in the race but lost his rhythm when his front tyre dropped after 10 circulations.

The tyre fade forced Smith to slow his pace and finished outside of the points in 18th. Smith said: "I was really happy with the start of the race; I was aggressive and I made up some positions."

"For the first 10 laps everything was working quite well and then I started to struggle with the front tyre and a lot of understeer and this was not something we had in any of the tests. The lap-times slowly dropped off."

"There were some corners where I was OK and others where I was just losing time. It was frustrating because I put myself in a good position to push along with the front guys."

"It was good to know more about where the KTM needs to improve by being with the other guys on track."

MotoGP heads to South America for the Grand Prix de la Republica Argentina at the Termas de Rio Hondo circuit on April 8.

Debutantes prove worthy of league title

Indoor Cricket

CHALLOW and Childrey Cricket Club took the City Indoor Cricket League crown to progress to the regional finals.

Last year's champions, Wolvercote CC, will also join Challow in the competition after finishing runners up.

Challow were competing in the indoor event for the first time but the talented team were worthy winners.

Opening bowler Ross Packham bagged a six-wicket haul and picked up the bowling award for the most number of wickets in the league, while the batting award went to Vijay Pamu from Oxenford CC.

Wolvercote's Toby Shelly won the fielding award and Chris Mitty from Cumnor CC collected the wicket-keeper award.

Like Challow, Wolvercote produced a consistent six players during the season's fixtures at the Bartholomew Sports Centre.

Matches were played on Sundays over the winter at the venue, where the tournament will return next season.

Challow and Wolvercote will now compete in a regional competition next season with two other teams from the Banbury Indoor League.

The winner will represent Oxfordshire as County Champions in the ECB National Indoor Competition.

Sport

City another win nearer survival

By George Welch

Oxford City

A 'BUZZING' Freddie Grant believes Oxford City are two wins away from securing their National League South status following a fantastic 3-1 win at play-off chasing Welling United.

The left back provided an assist and notched his third goal of the season late on in Saturday's victory to re-establish City 10-points above the drop zone.

The win meant the Hoops bounced back from the previous week's loss against league leaders Havant & Waterlooville and made it four wins from the last five matches.

"We are absolutely buzzing," Grant said.

"You don't expect to go to Welling away and get three points so we've done a good job in tough conditions.

"I had scored two goals this season [prior to the Welling game] and they were in a draw or a loss so to get a goal where we've come out winning

definitely means a lot more."

He added that two more wins – or six or seven points in total – will be enough to secure Oxford's sixth-tier status.

Boss Mark Jones was full of praise for the excellent Grant who cut to his right foot to curl the ball brilliantly beyond the keeper and secure the win.

He said: "Freddie's still only a young player and sometimes we forget that.

"He's got some good experience for someone so young – he's only 20.

"He's played a lot of games at this level now and I think he's getting better all of the time."

City took the lead on the hour when Rob Sinclair slotted home following some neat link up play with Matt Paterson.

Welling, who had won six of their previous eight games, equalised through substitute Jamie Philpot's 73rd minute header.

But City retaliated immediately with Sam Nombe restoring the lead with a prodded finish past Bailey Vose in the Wings goal.

Grant then popped up with his goal



Freddie Grant, pictured last month, scored Oxford City's third in the 3-1 win at Welling United. Picture: Michael Allen

as the game went into added time.

Jones said afterwards: "We are delighted with the win, we needed it, and we just need to keep going

[towards survival]."

City (15th) face another tricky test when they host second-placed Dartford on Saturday.

Railwaymen hit the buffers dropping out of top six

Evo Stik round-up

A LATE winner dented Didcot Town's play-off hopes after Saturday's 4-3 defeat against Mangotsfield United forced them out of the top six.

Kye Simpson completed his hat-trick in the 90th minute to condemn the Railwaymen to a first home defeat since November.

Simpson fired past Leigh Bedwell to give the away side the lead after just four minutes, and it was the same man who doubled their advantage just before the half-hour mark.

Morgan Williams reduced the deficit for Diddy on 36 minutes when goalkeeper Lochlan Robertson parried Callum McNish's effort into his path.

And Town were level moments later when Adam Learoyd nodded home an equaliser.

However, Andy Ballard's men made a slow start to the second half and Mangotsfield retook the lead on 47 minutes when Jordan Williams found the back of the net.

Seth Humphreys curled home with 15 minutes to go as Didcot once



Adam Learoyd levels for Didcot Town. Picture: Roger Neal

again clawed their way back to level the scores.

But Simpson had the final say at the death and tucked away the winner to snatch all three points.

It was a winless afternoon for Oxfordshire's eighth-tier teams.

Elsewhere in the Evo-Stik South West division, having had four matches postponed in a row, Kidlington returned to action with a 3-1 defeat at home to Wimborne Town.

Tobias Holmes stuck the visitors ahead but the Greens levelled through

Mark Janes within the opening half hour.

However, Holmes put Wimborne ahead just before the break and netted his hat-trick in the second half.

Struggling North Leigh threw away the lead three times as they drew 3-3 at Yate Town.

Todd Hathaway, Matthew Grabe and George Seacole all netted for Leigh.

In the East division, Thame United went down 4-2 at Fleet Town.

Liam Tack fired the visitors into a fifth minute lead, but the hosts took a 2-1 lead thanks to goals from Toyosi Olusanya and Ashley Lloyd.

Christopher Wales and Bradley Wilson made it 4-1 before Lynton Goss replied with a consolation.

United returned to winning ways with a 3-1 victory at home to lowly Hanwell Town on Tuesday.

The hosts, now 10 points off the play-offs, fell behind on 12 minutes but went in at the break ahead thanks to Dan West and Aston Goss strikes. Tack added the third with a minute to spare.

■ Banbury United's Evo-Stik Southern Premier game at Royston on Saturday was postponed.

Oxfordshire leagues results

Vanarama National League South

Saturday 17 March
Welling United 1-3 Oxford City

Evo-Stik South Premier

Saturday 17 March
Royston Town P-P Banbury United

Evo-Stik South East

Saturday 17 March
Fleet Town 4-2 Thame United
Tuesday 20 March
Thame United 3-1 Hanwell Town

Evo-Stik South West

Saturday 17 March
Didcot Town 3-4 Mangotsfield United
Kidlington 1-3 Wimborne
Yate Town 3-3 North Leigh
Wednesday 21 March
Slimbridge v Kidlington
(match played after we went to press)

UHSport Hellenic League Premier Division

Saturday 17 March
Abingdon United 0 - 2 Oxford City Nomads
Wantage Town 3 - 2 Brackley Town Saints
Tuesday 20 March
Oxford City Nomads 5-0 Royal Wootton Bassett

Stars aiming to rout devils and win title

Ice Hockey

BUMPER crowds are expected for Oxford City Stars' final two league games of the season as they close in on the South 2 trophy.

The title is in Stars' hands – but they face a nail-biting last couple of games against nearest rivals Solent Devils.

The Oxpens Road side top the table, three points ahead of the Devils having played a game more.

Oxford have won 21 of their 24 league games (one in overtime) but it all comes down to the Solent clashes on Sunday (home) and April 7 (away).

Kenny Redmond's side are in fine form and head into the vital final games on the back of a 12-0 rumbling of Cardiff fire on Saturday.

Dominic Hopkins was the shining star of the show with a hat-trick, netting once in the first period before finding the back of the net twice in the final session.

Braces came from Matthew Lawday and Conor Redmond as City struck double figures for the eighth time this season.

Joshua Oliver, Michael Whillock, Will Harrison, Joe Edwards and Dax Hedges added the extras in the easy victory.

The Stars were only 1-0 up after 25 minutes but made amends with seven goals in the final period.

Solent face a double header this week as they host Bracknell Hornets on Saturday, the day before the eagerly-awaited Oxford clash. The play-offs will follow these games.

Freds given a hand by opposition errors

Hellenic round-up

INDIVIDUAL errors helped Wantage Town beat Brackley Town Saints 3-2 to move within five points of the top-two in the Hellenic Premier League.

A trip in the box and sloppy possession in front of goal meant Brackley handed the Freds a 3-0 lead in south Oxfordshire.

Wantage took the lead on 17 minutes when Ryan Markham tucked home a penalty after Jack Dunmall was felled in the box.

The home side doubled their lead two minutes before the interval when

Steve Robertson, who scores for fun, side-footed into the net for his 37th goal of the season.

The game looked to be over seven minutes after the restart when James Glover found the back of the net for a commanding 3-0 Wantage lead.

But Brackley were not giving up that easy and, just before the hour, pulled one back through Ryan Knight.

With six minutes left on the clock, Saints pulled another goal back, a Lewis Baldwin free kick somehow squirming through Curtis Meare's hands and into the net.

Elsewhere, Oxford City Nomads came out 2-0 victors at Abingdon

United in the all-Oxfordshire contest.

Will McEachran gave the City development side the lead on 57 minutes before substitute Craig Fasanmade added a second in the 94th minute.

Nomads made it back-to-back wins for the first time this calendar year with a 5-0 home thumping of Royal Wootton Bassett on Tuesday.

Josh Pin netted a fantastic four, his first coming on 36 minutes.

But City had to wait until the final eight minutes to secure the points.

Pin grabbed another three and Connor Mattimore also got in on the action.



Ryan Markham scored Wantage Town's opener from the spot. Picture: sportshots.org.uk

U's make Posh look poor in well-deserved victory

By George Welch

Oxford United 2

Rob Dickie 6, James Henry 59

Peterborough United 1

Jack Marriott 61

Jack Baldwin 90+3

Attendance: 6,804 (708 away)

TOWERING defender Rob Dickie scored his first goal in yellow as Oxford United beat play-off chasing Peterborough United 2-1 at a freezing cold Kassam Stadium on Saturday.

The January signing poked home in aptly wintry conditions as a frozen Posh defence failed to clear a corner on six minutes.

A powerful second half strike from James Henry doubled the advantage before League One's top scorer Jack Marriott immediately halved the deficit.

But Oxford produced their best performance for weeks and held on to send the shivering U's fans home happy – and a little bit warmer – with a first win in seven games.

Crucially, the win increased their cushion over the relegation zone to six points (reduced to five after Tuesday's games) – and that was the main thing for Dickie.

The former Reading man said: "I take goals however they come but I'm just pleased we got the three points. I'm over the moon."

"I was in the right place at the right



Rob Dickie celebrates with Ryan Ledson after opening the scoring early in the game. Picture: Steve Daniels

time – sometimes you get lucky like that. Thankfully today I was the lucky one."

The 22-year-old added: "It was always going to be tricky with a lot of second balls and the swirling wind but we handled it really well."

"It's no secret that we're not the most physical side in the world but we've got a lot of fight and hunger."

The first half lacked quality, although Oxford, cutting through Boro's defence with ease, were the better side throughout. The visitors meanwhile were direct and wasteful.

The game exploded into life in the second half with two goals in three minutes.

A Henry thunder bolt ripped through Jonathan Bond in the Posh goal for a much-needed two-goal cushion on 59 minutes. The visiting custodian should have done better.

But Posh are full of goals and, two minutes later, Marcus Maddison found Marriott to prod home his 23rd league goal of the season following a short corner.

Posh fizzled out tamely however and skipper Jack Baldwin, who was sent off the same fixture last year, received his marching orders again late on.

The win lifted United, who travel to Portsmouth next Sunday, up to 16th in the table. The game is being shown on Sky Sports Football, 4pm kick off.



From left, Matt Berry-Hargreaves, Aaron Heap, Dejon Noel-Williams, Niall Clayton and Albie Hopkins have all been given their first professional contracts. Picture: OUFC

Five sign pro contracts

FIVE young U's are set to sign their first professional contracts at the club.

Oxford United said they were 'delighted' to offer deals to goalkeeper Niall Clayton, midfielder Aaron Heap, winger Albie Hopkins, striker Dejon Noel-Williams and defender Matt Berry-Hargreaves.

The quintet join striker Owen James, a first year scholar offered professional terms earlier in the season.

It is believed to be a record number of youth team players from a single year to receive contracts.

Head of academy Dan Harris, said: "While it is clearly exciting news for the lads to be extending their time with Oxford United, they have a lot of hard work ahead of them before they can consider themselves a player."

"All five lads are good characters who I know will work tirelessly to build on this opportunity."

Rex Mannings, Graham Bryan,



Owen James was given a professional contract earlier in the season

Ben Chilcott, Dan Carr and Nathan Baker will not have their contracts extended.

The U's currently have a handful of former trainees in their ranks as professionals: Sam Long, Josh Ashby, James Roberts, Jack Stevens, Malachi Napa, Shandon Baptiste and Manny Agboola.

The club is in the process of establishing a full Under-23 development squad to bridge the gap between youth team football and the senior side.

Excellent commitment to get three points

CARETAKER boss Derek Fazackerley praised his Oxford United players' commitment following 'a fantastic result' that eased their relegation woes.

Rob Dickie and James Henry found the back of the net in a confidence boosting 2-1 win over play-off hopefuls Peterborough United at a chilly Kassam Stadium on Saturday.

And with a permanent manager expected to be appointed before Sunday's trip to Portsmouth, another play-off chasing side, Fazackerley

could have signed off in perfect style.

"It's a fantastic result against a side that has three good results behind them and have a very dangerous front two who always create problems," he said.

"The players were resilient, they stuck at it and offered them very few chances."

"I was disappointed with the goal they scored as once again it's come from a set-piece."

He added: "There was quite a lot of feeling and intensity in the game

and when you are in a position that we are in that we haven't won at home for a considerable amount of time then you need that type of game. The commitment from the players was excellent."

"I'm pleased that they've been rewarded because the performances of late have not been as bad as the results – there's no doubt about that – but ultimately we're judged on results."

"The result has been a long time coming and I'm pleased for them."

Carroll earns call up for Ireland Under 19s

OXFORD United defender Canice Carroll has been called up for the next qualification stage of Republic of Ireland Under-19's European Championship campaign.

The 19-year-old, pictured in action earlier this season, has been selected for the young Greens' second stage Elite Round Group Five fixtures against Slovakia, Kosovo and Portugal.

The right back was given permission by the Irish FA to join the squad after the 2-1 win over Peterborough United on Saturday, for which he was an unused substitute.

Former U's youth teamer Carroll,



who captained the Irish in friendlies last month, and his team-mates took on Slovakia yesterday (Wednesday) after we went to press in their first

game. They play Kosovo and Portugal on Saturday and Tuesday respectively.

The Under-19s eased through the first stage last year, topping a group that included Serbia, Cyprus and Azerbaijan.

Ireland need to top their group again in the second stage this month to progress to July's finals in Finland.

Gino van Kessel (Curacao), Isaac Buckley-Ricketts (England Under-20s) and Shandon Baptiste (Grenada) are also unavailable for Sunday's game at Portsmouth due to their international commitments but United have not asked for the game to be postponed.

SkyBet League 1		GP	GD	PTS
1	Blackburn Rovers	37	35	76
2	Shrewsbury Town	37	22	75
3	Wigan Athletic	34	40	71
4	Rotherham United	37	20	65
5	Scunthorpe United	38	9	58
6	Plymouth Argyle	37	2	57
7	Peterborough United	37	12	56
8	Portsmouth	37	-2	52
9	Charlton Athletic	36	-2	52
10	Bristol Rovers	37	-3	50
11	Bradford City	36	-6	50
12	Gillingham	36	2	49
13	Southend United	37	-12	47
14	Doncaster Rovers	37	1	46
15	Blackpool	37	-4	46
16	Oxford United	36	-2	45
17	Walsall	37	-7	44
18	Fleetwood Town	37	-9	42
19	AFC Wimbledon	37	-11	42
20	Oldham Athletic	36	-12	40
21	Northampton Town	38	-25	40
22	MK Dons	37	-14	38
23	Rochdale	35	-10	34
24	Bury	37	-24	30



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The Renault of Carlos Sainz powers round the track in testing
Picture: Renault Sport Formula One Team



Time to go racing

CARS unveiled, drivers confirmed and two weeks of testing complete – Formula 1 is back.

Practice gets under way for the long-awaited season opener in Melbourne tomorrow (Friday) with lights out at the Australian GP at 6.10am British time on Sunday.

Oxfordshire's three teams had a contrasting fortnight of testing in Barcelona but Renault and Haas, who impressed, and Williams, who endured a challenging test, are all raring to go.

Enstone-based Renault impressed at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya and look to lead the 'best of the rest' in the midfield behind the top three of Mercedes, Ferrari and the Renault-powered Red Bull.

Banbury outfit Haas performed better than expected and could be the dark horses for the 2018 campaign while sleeping giant Williams, based in Grove, are more difficult to place after struggling to get the FW41 to drive properly.

See inside for a full preview of all three teams.

Wanted: a new U's manager

By George Welch

DAY 59 and we are still no nearer to finding out who the next Oxford United manager will be.

The long-winded managerial hunt this week dragged into its eighth week with much change to the betting.

This is despite weekly updates from new chairman and owner Sumrith 'Tiger' Thanakarnjanasuth promising an announcement imminently.

Tiger wants a new manager with the 'wow' factor to be in the dugout by Sunday's trip to Portsmouth but, with an expected announcement not forthcoming before we went to press yesterday, the wait continues.

Rumours of Pep Clotet's replacement have swirled around the club since the Spaniard's sacking on January 22, with a different man touted as the favourite for the job on an almost weekly basis.

Bookies recommendations have

become virtually meaningless, with 'favourites' David Unsworth, Craig Bellamy, Frank Lampard, Brian McDermott, Patrick Kluivert and Michael Appleton all heading the market before dropping away.

But if Tiger did want to consult SkyBet for some inspiration, he is not short of options.

Leading the way as we went to press was 8/11 favourite Karl Robinson, who, according to reports in London, had his offer to resign from

Charlton Athletic turned down by club bosses.

The former MK Dons boss may not provide the desired 'wow' factor but next in line is Jaap Stam who went straight in at second favourite. The Reading boss was sacked yesterday, having been appointed by Tiger during his time at the Royals.

Ostersunds FK boss Graham Potter, one of the more left field potential candidates, is at 12/1, despite signing a new deal at the Swedish club.

SkyBet odds as we went to press

Karl Robinson	8/11
Jaap Stam	3/1
Frank Lampard	9/1
Derek Fazackerley	12/1
Graham Potter	12/1
Sven-Goran Eriksson	12/1
Nathan Jones	20/1
Patrick Kluivert	20/1
Steven Gerrard	20/1
Harry Redknapp	25/1

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Taylor Newspapers Ltd

Published by Taylor Newspapers Ltd,
Newspaper House, 4A Hawkestone, Didcot, Oxfordshire OX11 7HR.
Telephone 01235 511700 (Head Office).
Printed by Iliffe Print Cambridge, Milton, Cambridge CB24 6PP